

Socialist Challenge

Labour Co-ordinating
Committee
Conference
Trade Unions
and Socialism

Central Hall,
Westminster
Saturday 18 July,

Speakers include Tony Benn,
Arthur Scargill, Bernard Dix
and Audrey Wise

Delegates from trade unions and
Labour parties. Contact LCC,
9 Poland St, London W1

A summer of discontent?

AGAINST WITCH-HUNTS

DEFEND BENN

THE civil service unions, the rail unions, and ambulance workers are very angry. Thatcher's bludgeon has provoked them all into industrial action.

As Phil Dexter reports on page 15, members of four main civil service unions have voted for all-out strike action to counter the Tories' intransigence over pay.

Even the leaders of these unions recognise that their organisations will be crippled for years if they now bow to Thatcher's 7 per cent pay norm. Substantial job cuts would be sure to follow.

The axe on the public sector is also threatening rail workers with 12,000 redundancies if the unions push ahead with their 13 per cent claim.

The response by delegates to the annual conference of the train drivers' union ASLEF this week was to vote overwhelmingly for strike action against British Rail's planned cuts to services. A one-day national strike is scheduled for next week.

Ambulance workers are another group in the front line of the Tories' war on working class living standards. The government has offered them a pay rise of £5.89 a week in answer to their claim for almost three times that amount. Without decent pay, the ambulance service will decline still further.

Strike

Next Thursday all ambulance workers in Britain will be on one-day strike, and the depth of militancy in Scotland and London is likely to mean that there will not even be emergency cover in these areas.

The Callaghan government, which tried to hold pay rises to 5 per cent, experienced the anger of public sector workers in the so-called winter of discontent.

Now the Thatcher government, committed to a massive shake-out of the British economy in favour of the bosses, is coming up against the wrath of its victims. The occupation at Laurence Scott and the struggle at Rovers are further evidence of that.

The prime minister may well be confident that civil servants and other white-collar workers do not have the industrial muscle of the miners, whom she rapidly sought to appease over the pit closures.

It would certainly be a blow to all of us if the civil servants are crushed in the manner of the postal workers during the early days of the Heath regime. It's up to all of us, through our solidarity, to see that that piece of history is not repeated.

There is one obvious means of overcoming the weakness of sectional struggles. We should all pull together to bring down this wretched government — now!



FOOT has declared war on Benn in the Parliamentary Labour Party. Every Labour pipsqueak and nonentity can add their twopence worth of venom to the anti-Benn lobby.

Foot has joined the alliance which stretches from Labour's right wing via such reactionary rags as the *Sun* through to the neanderthal Tory backbenches.

Foot's shadow cabinet tirade received its fitting tribute when he was greeted with a great cheer in Parliament the following day — from the Tory benches.

The great merit of Foot's defence of cabinet 'responsibility' against the democratic rights of the ranks of the labour movement, is that it shows where he stands. Foot's election as party leader was greeted enthusiastically at the base of the Labour Party and the trade unions.

He has been cheered to the echo at the vast unemployment protest rallies. He has claimed to support the radical policies of Labour's conference, on nuclear disarmament, on jobs, on democracy.

Now he has ended up bolstering Healey's camp (which has nothing but contempt for those policies) against Benn; supporting Cabinet 'responsibility' (to big business and the IMF) against democratic accountability to the workers movement.

But Foot's message was not really aimed at the PLP. He had his eyes on the movement which supports Benn, now gathering pace in the unions and constituencies. The day after Foot's attack, the executive of the Transport and General Workers Union met.

The TGWU view on deputy leader may be the make or break of this campaign. The decision to throw out the motion supporting acting general secretary Alex Kitson's anti-Benn statements by a four to one majority is *positive*.

Handing over the power to the Labour Party delegation to decide on the deputy leader vote is *negative*. This makes a mockery of the rights of the forthcoming TGWU biennial conference. It will have to be challenged.

Much remains to be done to build support for Benn's candidacy. The Labour Co-ordinating Committee's trade union conference can give the campaign an enormous boost.

The support in the ranks of the labour movement for Benn is there, despite the manoeuvrings of the likes of Foot and Kitson.

And Foot's action has put Labour's cabinet on the agenda as a suitable case for democratic treatment.



Benn's growing support frightens right wingers Foot, Healey, Silkin, and Kitson as well as Hattersley and Shore



JOBS NOT BOMBS: CARDIFF 4 JULY



Pete Hayes, AUEW and strike committee
Our fight is everyone's fight. We have to end the situation where they've been picking us off one by one. Someone has to make a stand and at Laurence Scott's we've found 650 people willing to have a go.

We didn't start with any ideas about fighting the government or whatever, but if that's what's needed, then that's what we'll have to do.

Steve Longshaw AUEW shop steward and strike committee

650 people have sat in at Laurence Scott Electromotors in Higher Openshaw in Manchester in dispute. They are all prepared to fight to the finish to defeat the attempt to close the whole factory and throw us all out on the dole.

As the weeks have passed, instead of getting depressed, the

workforce has got more confident. Our support has broadened. Even MPs have taken up our case.

Snipe was dismayed by this and the adverse publicity he has begun to receive. So after 6 weeks he agreed to meet the officials. This happened on 1 June.

A meeting on Sunday 31 May voted unanimously to back the approach of John Tocher, the district organiser of the AUEW on the basis of no loss of jobs and worksharing.

Mick Cordingley AUEW TASS and strike committee:

Before the strike I wasn't really involved in the union. I used to work on the shop floor but went into the offices because I thought it would be better but I'm not so sure now.

At first when the dispute started I was opposed to sitting in the factory. But quite quickly I realised that we had to stand up and fight.

Miners support Laurence Scott sit in

By Pete Clifford

YORKSHIRE miners sent a cheque for £500 to the eight-week long occupation against closure at Laurence Scott, Manchester. Along with it was an invitation to send a delegation over to discuss blacking.

Laurence Scott's owner Arthur Snipe, of Mining Supplies has made a killing out of sales of motors to the nationalised coal industry.

Now he hopes to close the Manchester factory to further boost his profits throwing 650 workers onto the dole. In a letter to the miners' union John Tocher, engineering union organiser, argued it was time they united to put a stop to parasites such as Snipe.

In Manchester a support committee has been set up chaired by Tom Macafee convenor from Gardners who successfully occupied against redundancies last year.

Support is growing in other areas. Delegations last week went to the Midlands and London.

Midlands

'WE WILL win — with your support.' That's the message that a delegation from the occupied Laurence Scott Electromotors plant in Openshaw Manchester, brought to the Midlands last week.

In a two-day visit the delegation met with convenors and shop stewards from plants in Birmingham and the Black Country.

Amongst those plants covered were the British Leyland plant at Longbridge, Lucas Aerospace in Wolverhampton and Birmingham, Lucas Electrical, Laystall Engineering, Turner Manufacturing, Cannon Industries and the

first visit to LSE's sister plant in Wolverhampton.

Members of the delegation also spoke at the mass demonstration organised by the workers at the Rover SD1, at the AUEW shop stewards quarterly, and Birmingham Trades Council.

London

PETE Hayes, from the LSE strike committee reports: The London trip was set up for us by Socialist Challenge. We have collected £600 and have firm promises of more.

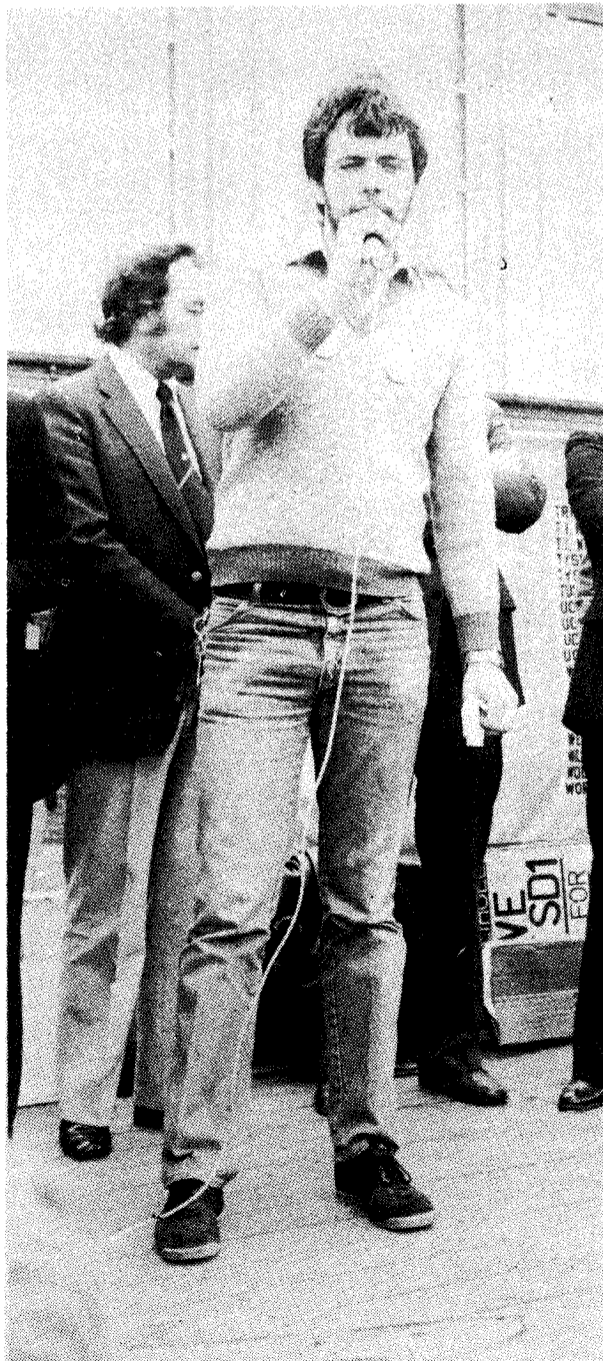
The response can only be described as overwhelming. We've been to Ford, Smiths Industries, Thames Barrier site, Chloride, Fidelity and Acton Works amongst others.

We spoke at Lambeth and Hackney trade councils and the North London district committee of the engineering union.

We went to teachers' meetings where we were bowled over with their generosity and sincerity. We spoke at the Tower Hamlet March for Jobs and made collections on the big demo itself and at the GLC rally.

We would like to thank all those who gave us their support and donations, and all those supporters of Socialist Challenge who helped make our trip so successful.

Send donations and messages of support to Laurence Scott joint shop stewards c/o G Fryer, 20 Roundcross, M Romiley Cheshire. Tel: 061-223 3815.



Phil Penning from Laurence Scott brings greetings to the Rover workers

BL: 'Edwardes kills all known plants'

Since 1979 Michael Edwardes has axed 60,000 jobs in Leyland and seven plants have been closed in whole or in part.

The announcement of the closure of the Rover plant will cost another 2,000 jobs if it goes through and another 6,000 redundancies are in the pipeline as a result of the latest Edwardes 'rescue plan'.

It is now the firm view of both the Rover shop stewards and the whole Leyland Combine, that Edwardes plans to close down Leyland while hiving off a few pre-packaged units like the Land Rover.

The People's March was a turning point in the national fight against unemployment. The Rover fightback is rapidly becoming the point where the Leyland workers turn the tables on Edwardes.

PAT HICKEY, deputy convenor Rover SD1, Solihull, continues his diary of resistance to the closures.



committee's opposition. This is a potential bomb. An overtime ban of that nature would lead to tracks being laid off two days a week. If that happens we would have to have a one-out, all-out position.

We would be in a head-

on confrontation within ten days. The plant is not ready for that yet. We tell the company about the shop stewards' position in the afternoon. They reply that if the overtime is not worked in the paint shop today 40 bodies will be ruined and they will lock

Monday, 1 June. Holiday's over. Rain stops and the sun shines. Now everything is directed towards the demo on Thursday. Over the holidays we have handed out over 5000 leaflets around the plant. There are another 5000 to distribute.

At a committee meeting at 8 am we have a discussion about the £15m offer made by Tory MP Gilroy-Bevan for the Rover plant. £15m wouldn't buy a decent car show room never mind an assembly plant. But we are concerned lest the offer be seen as viable by the workforce and diverts our campaign.

But most do not see it as a serious option, believing that Gilroy-Bevan is more concerned about his job as MP for Yardley than our jobs at Rover. On with the demo.

We need posters, placards, leaflets, badges, a lorry, loudhailers and banners. We also need to organise delegations from other BL plants. We get messages of support from Labour Party wards, trade union branches and shop stewards committees.

Rumours

Reaction to the demo from the shop floor is still mixed. Some are saying that there is no point. Some foremen are spreading rumours that the redundancy pay will be chopped if it goes ahead.

There is a dispute at Smith's Heaters which could result in a layoff at Rovers tomorrow. This would be a disaster for Thursday. There is a mass meeting at Smith's tomorrow.

Tuesday. Start writing bulletin no 3. Lead on the demo and support from outside the plant, also attack the Gilroy-Bevan offer.

In the paint shop a group has produced a coffin to carry on the demo. On the lines, people are producing their own placards and slogans. One reads, 'Edwardes kills all known plants'.

Stewards meeting at dinner time discusses what should be done to those who don't join the march. We decide to concentrate on winning support.

The mass meeting at Smiths goes on all morning. We will definitely be laid off tonight if there is no resumption of work there. Just before dinner time we hear that they have gone back to work. Relief all round.

A proposal to ban all overtime is moved and carried, despite the plant

Edwardes kills plants'

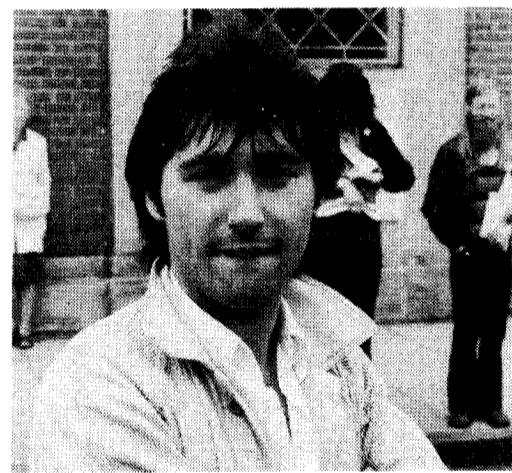
ROVER WANTS JOBS NOT 2,000 ON THE DOLE!



Pat Hickey on the demo



The banner says it all



Keith Deeley

A FEW months ago two of my friends had steady jobs with what they thought to be good prospects. Then out of the blue they were given notice of their redundancies.

A few months ago I would have laughed at someone if they had said they were going to close the Rover SD1. But now we have also been given notice of our redundancies.

Just last week my father was told that they are closing his firm down. This senseless destruction of people's livelihoods has got to stop, but I can't see any end in sight.

That is why I think that the Rover should act now and show this government that we will take no more.

Rob Spittle, SD1 shop steward

I THINK that the work force of the SD1 were, before today's march, in a bewildered frame of mind. Management had promised a future for the plant in return for efficiency. We proved our efficiency almost beyond belief.

We've been totally misled into believing that our jobs were safe. But today's march has brought about a new mood of optimism.

People from different parts of the country have come together to oppose the closure and give us the support we badly need. Now we know we're not alone. Now we know we can win.

strikers in South Africa. We give support and take steps to put pressure on the company.

The main discussion is around the closures. The committee gives full support to the SD1 and agrees to organise a demonstration on 1 August in Birmingham of the car and components industry. The SD1 has the responsibility of organising the demo which has the support of trades council.

We will need to produce a vast number of

leaflets and speak to all the major shop stewards committees in the area. The combine also agrees to organise a conference of the British motor industry.

We will be seeking support from Ford, Vauxhall and Talbot. There is a good deal of discussion but it is clear that the ball rests with the SD1.

Sunday. Get up late, talk to Radio Birmingham and the *Guardian*, write for Socialist Challenge, get neurotic about the tasks in front of us.

three against.

Dinner time the bulletin arrives and almost all copies have gone in an hour. It is playing a really useful role and the shop stewards are making more use of it than the earlier ones. We do a phone round of the local press and get pretty good coverage for the demo.

and chanting 'Maggie out, Edwardes out' and 'Michael Edwardes we aren't going on the dole'.

As we pass a school, kids shout 'Maggie out'. Four workers from the Laurence Scott occupation also join the demo. Labour councillors and full time trade union officials assure the rally of their support.

A collection raises over £160 for Laurence Scott. The Action Committee goes to meet the Solihull council while the demo marches back to the plant. We reach the plant at 1.45.

There are not enough people to run both lines so only one operates. We are back on the clock for 2.15 pm. I leave about 3 o'clock for a Socialist Challenge meeting in Manchester.

Friday. The demo has been well covered in the media. People are well pleased and morale is really high. Lots are asking, when's the next one?

Solihull council has given full support and are calling for a public inquiry into the BL board strategy and demanding a moratorium on any closures until that is done.

After work there is a TGWU branch meeting. We decide to send delegates to the unemployment demonstration in July and we give £1000 to the SD1 campaign.

We need it, we are spending money like it was going out of fashion.

Saturday. 11 am, the combine committee. From about 8.30 am on, the media are phoning for information and statements. I repeat the call for a public inquiry and challenge Michael Edwardes to go for another shop floor ballot.

Attention is now focussed on Cowley's position of not accepting the SD1. The combine opens with a discussion on BL's sacking of the

Thursday. General atmosphere of excitement. We sweat on what the response is going to be and look at the weather every five minutes. 11.30am the tracks stop.

We take the loudhailer around the tracks urging people to get out. Virtually everybody joins the demo. As we walk off the site a large contingent from Land Rover and Range Rover join us.

The demo is about 3000 strong which means that about 1000 have joined the Solihull work force. The mood is excellent. Lots of shouting, singing



the paint shop out.

meeting for tomorrow.

Also, overtime is needed to take a consignment of heaters from Smiths so the tracks can run tomorrow. The committee lifts the overtime ban for today and we call a shop stewards committee

Wednesday. Shop stewards meeting. There is a thorough discussion on the strategy and tactics of the campaign. The overtime ban is lifted with only

The new leader of Labour's right wing



Michael Foot — one in the eye for Benn?

By Brian Heron

MICHAEL FOOT has won the honorary leadership of Labour's right wing. This is the meaning of Foot's windy lecture on 'cabinet responsibility' on 3 June.

In reality, cabinet responsibility is a code phrase for letting the ranks of the unions and the party celebrate their socialist ideals, while the real decision makers remain accountable to the banks, big business and the IMF. This is how Labour's cabinet behaved from 1974 to 1979, and it demoralised and confused Labour's supporters, producing the lowest turn-out for Labour in any election since the war.

Policy

Foot claimed that the shadow cabinet was applying Labour conference policy, and Benn was wrong to 'challenge' its 'good faith'. Labour's leader spoke of 'widespread agreement' with the alternative economic strategy, Britain's removal from the EEC, and nuclear disarmament.

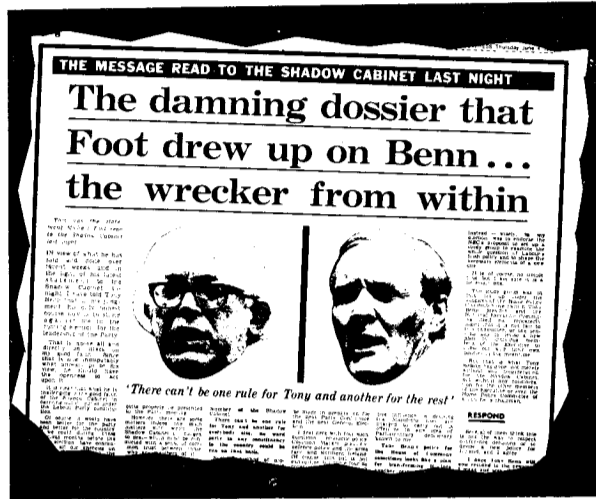
Healey backed Foot's speech. He said Benn 'should have... the integrity to have stood against Michael Foot personally'. Integrity is an elastic concept for Healey.

Integrity

He stood against Foot for the leadership, now he is standing for deputy under rules he rejects. And he does not support one word of the policies for which Foot claimed 'widespread agreement'.

But Healey knows that cabinet responsibility greatly mellows those who were previously the darlings of the left. Collaboration with the real rulers of the capitalist system has had this effect before, and Healey had great faith in Foot's capacity to follow his left-wing predecessors in the same direction.

While the parliamentary party have rallied



How the right-wing Daily Express backed Foot

round Foot, his cabinet lecture did not impress others. The day after, the executive of the TGWU met. A motion was discussed which endorsed the criticisms of the union's acting general secretary, Alex Kitson, had made of Benn's challenge for the leadership. The motion fell by a 4-1 majority. That reflects the pressure on the union leadership from the thousands upon thousands

of active trade unionists who back Benn, and it expresses the feelings of the 120,000 who took part in the final stage of the Peoples March who, at the end, cheered Benn and booed Healey. The TGWU will now take its decision on who to back for deputy leader on the eve of Labour's conference.

Many would support a

challenge to Foot from Benn. And Foot is right to say Benn's campaign is over the direction of the party. But Benn has declined the challenge, insisting he is not engaged in 'a contest of personalities'.

Air

Certainly, the labour movement desperately needs to work out policies designed to kick out the Tories, and strengthen the battle to commit the next Labour government to socialist measures. It also needs to clarify where its leaders stand on the fight for such policies, replacing those who waver, building a left in the unions and party powerful enough to credibly challenge Foot.

And one thing is certain. Last week's events have shown that the democratic fresh air which has blown through the election of the leader and deputy leader of the Labour Party should now be directed towards the election of Labour's entire parliamentary leadership.

Michael Foot and Tony Benn -action replay 30 years on

By Geoff Bell

ACCORDING to Tony Benn, what lies at the heart of the contest for the deputy leadership of the Labour Party is democratic accountability of MPs and the parliamentary leadership.

It is, Benn has said, a question of dispelling the trust with which ordinary party members and the electorate regard those who rise to the top of the labour movement.

The strength of this argument is strikingly illustrated in the row which led Foot to admonish Benn at last week's meeting of the Shadow Cabinet. Foot was upset over Benn's decision to follow Labour conference policy and vote against the Tory defence proposals.

That it was Foot who should be the one to carpet Benn is wonderfully ironic. For, in doing so Foot gave a classical example of the poacher turned gamekeeper. There is a remarkable parallel in what Benn did during the defence debate and what a former leader of the Labour left did nearly 30 years ago.

Bevan

That leader was Aneurin Bevan, MP for Ebbw Vale. The stand Bevan took, the way he was attacked by the party leadership and hounded by the media, has been recorded in a biography of Bevan.

The author is one Michael Foot, the present MP for Ebbw Vale.

Foot records that

Bevan's defiance of the parliamentary leadership came during a defence debate in March 1952. The Tory government proposed an increase in defence expenditure of £500 million.

Defence

In doing so the Tories were doing no more than what had been approved in principle by the previous Labour government.

The current Tory defence policy is also, in many respects, just a carry over from where the last Labour cabinet left off.

In 1952, because they were now in opposition and required a more radical image, Labour's parliamentary leadership proposed an amendment to the Tory defence plans. The present shadow cabinet did the same.

When the amendment was lost in 1952 Labour MPs were told by their leaders to abstain on the final vote. The present shadow cabinet said the same. Nye Bevan rebelled against this instruction

and voted against the government, along with 56 other MPs. Tony Benn on 20 May did the same, as did 75 Labour MPs.

After the vote Tony Benn was once again the target for abuse in the media. In his biography of Bevan, Foot somewhat sarcastically records that 29 years ago, the Daily



Tony Benn for Deputy — 'The fastest selling badge on the People's March, (Morning Star, 1 June). You too can have a copy of this hot property for just 20p (plus 11½p postage).

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Herald, rebuked the rebels 'in its most magisterial tone'.

The Herald wrote: 'This is a time for frankness. We must tell Mr Aneurin Bevan and his

supporters that they set out on a course which will harm the country and imperil the future of the labour movement.

'They are deliberately bent on...challenging the democratic decisions of the Parliamentary Labour Party, and advertising their antagonism to its elected leader Mr Attlee... The labour movement is becoming tired of this minority's egoism'.

If this sounds rather familiar, so is what happened next. At a PLP meeting the following week Attlee proposed that Bevan and the rest of the Labour rebels sign an official apology for voting the way they had, and promise never to act in the same manner again.

Squabbles

One of Attlee's supporters, Arthur Deakin, general secretary of the transport union, insisted: 'The present squabble is not centred around any principle at all, but rather around personalities'.

Similarly, Michael Foot last week sought to reduce Benn's statements to representing no more than 'an attack on my good faith'.

In 1952 Bevan replied: 'Is a socialist in danger of being expelled from the Labour Party for voting against the Tories?'. Remembering Foot's attempt to try and get Benn to resign from the Shadow

Cabinet, a modern version of Bevan's words would read: 'Is a socialist in danger of being sacked from the parliamentary leadership for voting against the Tories?'

Obscene

Attlee's manoeuvres came to nothing. His demand for recantation was defeated at a meeting of the PLP. Foot's attempt to force Benn into an election has also come to nothing.

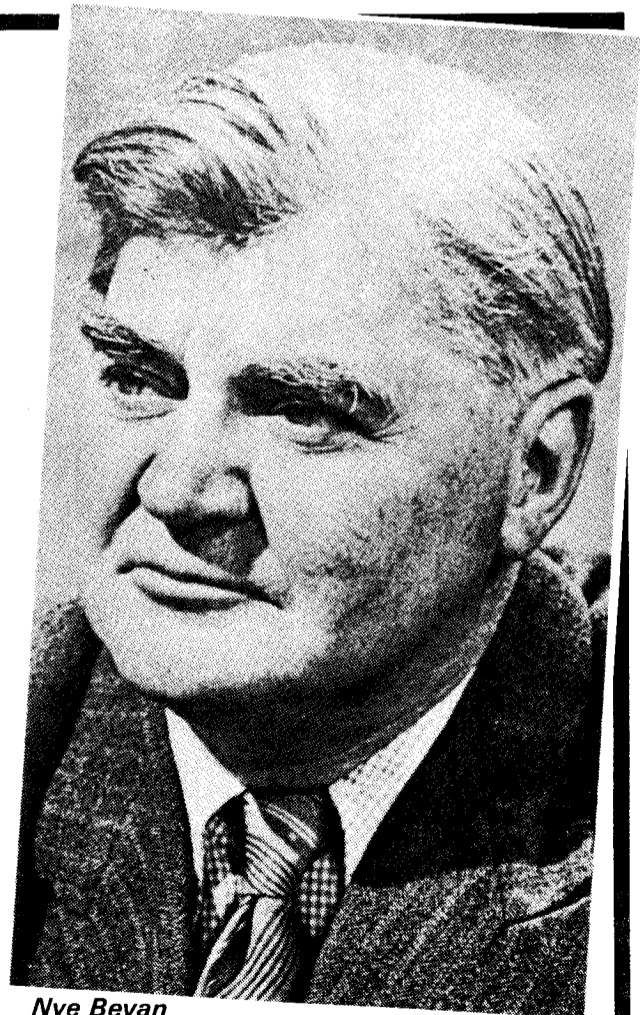
Benn has insisted his campaign is over policies, not the personalities of Michael Foot, Denis Healey and Tony Benn. Is Tony Benn telling the truth?

Well, seeing the carbon copy of the Bevan defence vote and the Benn defence vote it is interesting to record Michael Foot's conclusions on the former:

'One aspect of the controversy showed no sign of subsiding. Persistently the newspapers described the debate in terms of 'Bevan versus Attlee, Bevan's grab for power'. 'If I disappeared tomorrow', said Bevan, 'the same issues would still be there. It is time this obscene preoccupation with individual lives and careers gave way to a more dispassionate consideration of facts'...

Ambitious

'Could it really be that his personal ambitions



Nye Bevan

were as modest as these words imply? The final answer remained locked in his own heart, and of course it would be absurd if the possibility of his succession to the leadership never crossed his mind...

'He had every right to consider himself a candidate for office. But what was false was the suggestion that all his moves, manoeuvres, protests,

resignations, attacks were calculated however ineptly to further his personal advancement to the leadership.'

Tony Benn may not be an exact replica of Nye Bevan, but is Michael Foot a replica of Clem Attlee? Whichever it is, Michael Foot the writer is a much more pleasant chap than Michael Foot the Labour leader.

Labour Party

Wales Labour Party says no to the bomb

By Helen Slynovics and Barry Wilkins, Cardiff North CLP

UNILATERAL nuclear disarmament and opposition to British participation in any nuclear defence strategy, is now the policy of the Wales Labour Party. At its recent annual conference in Llandudno a comprehensive unilateralist resolution was overwhelmingly carried.

The resolution called for affiliation to Wales CND and Labour CND, and 'support for their plans to mount massive opposition against the presence of Cruise and Trident missiles.' The motion also called for talks with the Wales TUC, to examine ways of persuading trade unionists in

Wales to refuse to participate in nuclear war 'survival exercises'.

Unfortunately, this positive step forward by the conference was not carried over to the discussion on the draft manifesto for Wales. This 'Programme for Wales' is a diluted and right-wing version of the Alternative

Economic strategy.

However there are signs of a willingness to challenge the right-wing control of the party in Wales. A motion calling for the next Labour government to nationalise Britain's financial institutions was carried against the advice of the executive committee.

Benn

The right hit back at a fringe meeting called by the Wales Labour Coordinating Committee in support of Tony Benn for the deputy leadership. There was an organized attempt by the right to

dominate the meeting.

The main target was Derek Gregory, full-time officer for the National Union of Public Employees who chaired the meeting. George Wright, general secretary of the Wales TUC, attacked Gregory for his role at the recent annual conference of the Wales TUC.

At that conference Gregory had led the opposition to the right-wing 'Social Plan' which advocates systematic collaboration between trade unions and the bosses, and wage control by a future Labour government.

In the elections for the executive committee, an

organized right-wing campaign ensured that Derek Gregory lost his seat.

Abse

This underlines the need for the fight against the right-wing to be stepped up, organised and above all, taken into the rank and file of the trade unions.

It was left to right-winger, Leo Abse, MP for Pontypool, to call for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland. 'The Labour Party must prevent Northern Ireland from becoming our Vietnam,' he said to applause from delegates.

Such remarks coming from the likes of Abse who had led a vicious personal attack on Tony Benn's bid for the deputy leadership, at a fringe meeting called by the Labour Solidarity Campaign indicates the forces which are building up at the base of the Labour Party in support of the withdrawal of British troops. Abse's declaration can be used to broaden these forces still further.

Initiative

But the left must not leave the initiative in the hands of the right.



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Labour women: struggle then, struggle now

By Judith Arkwright

THIS weekend the annual conference of Labour Women takes place in Manchester. It does so at a time when there is a mushrooming of women's sections in the party and women's organisations within the unions. But this is nothing new, and in assessing the relevance of these contemporary developments it is useful to look back at what has gone before.

In particular, there is the experience of the Women's Labour League, a mass organisation of women affiliated to the Labour Party at the start of this century. Set up in 1906, the League had, by 1910 some 5,000 members.

By the early 1920s, one report spoke of 'many millions of proletarian women ... organised in women's suffrage societies, in women's trade unions ... in consumer co-ops and in the Labour Party and Independent Labour Party.'

Growth

One possible reason for the speedy growth of these organisations was the fact that between 1881 and 1891 the number of women in employment rose by 60 per cent. Because they invariably tended to be excluded from trade unions, the women needed some mechanism for organising their demands.

Thus, the Women's Labour League agitated for better conditions of labour and hours for women, provision of school meals, and women's franchise.

In 1913 the paper *Labour Women* was launched, and it soon had a huge circulation. It took up a variety of debates, ranging from whether housewives should be paid, to the question of the vote, and to why women should oppose the first world war.

Class

At a national level, the League contained many contradictions. Melvina Walker, a member of a suffrage society and later the Communist Party, described a meeting of the League she went to in 1911.

The main speakers, such as Mrs Ramsey MacDonald and Beatrice Webb, displayed attitudes which repelled Walker. She complained bitterly of the middle class, philanthropic views of these women, and contrasted that to the predominantly working class audience.

Feminism

The leaders of the League were very much tied into the leadership of the Labour Party and the trade unions as a whole. This could be one reason

why the League was unsuccessful in forcing the Labour Party to consistently take up women's demands, and why the organisation itself was rather confused in its stance towards explicitly feminist issues.

For example, women's conferences in the 1920s took a clear position in favour of making contraception available through local authorities. But over a period of years the Labour Party's conferences consistently voted down this demand.

Similarly, on the suffrage issue, the Labour Party, even the League, vacillated for so long that Mrs MacDonald once remarked that she was concerned at the number of women who were leaving the League to join suffrage societies, or at least who worked with them.

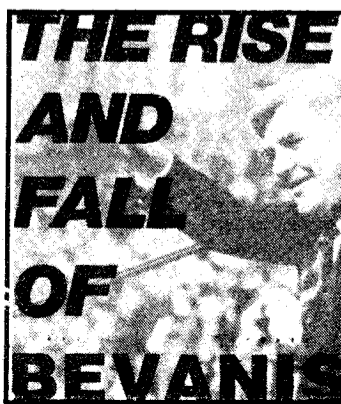
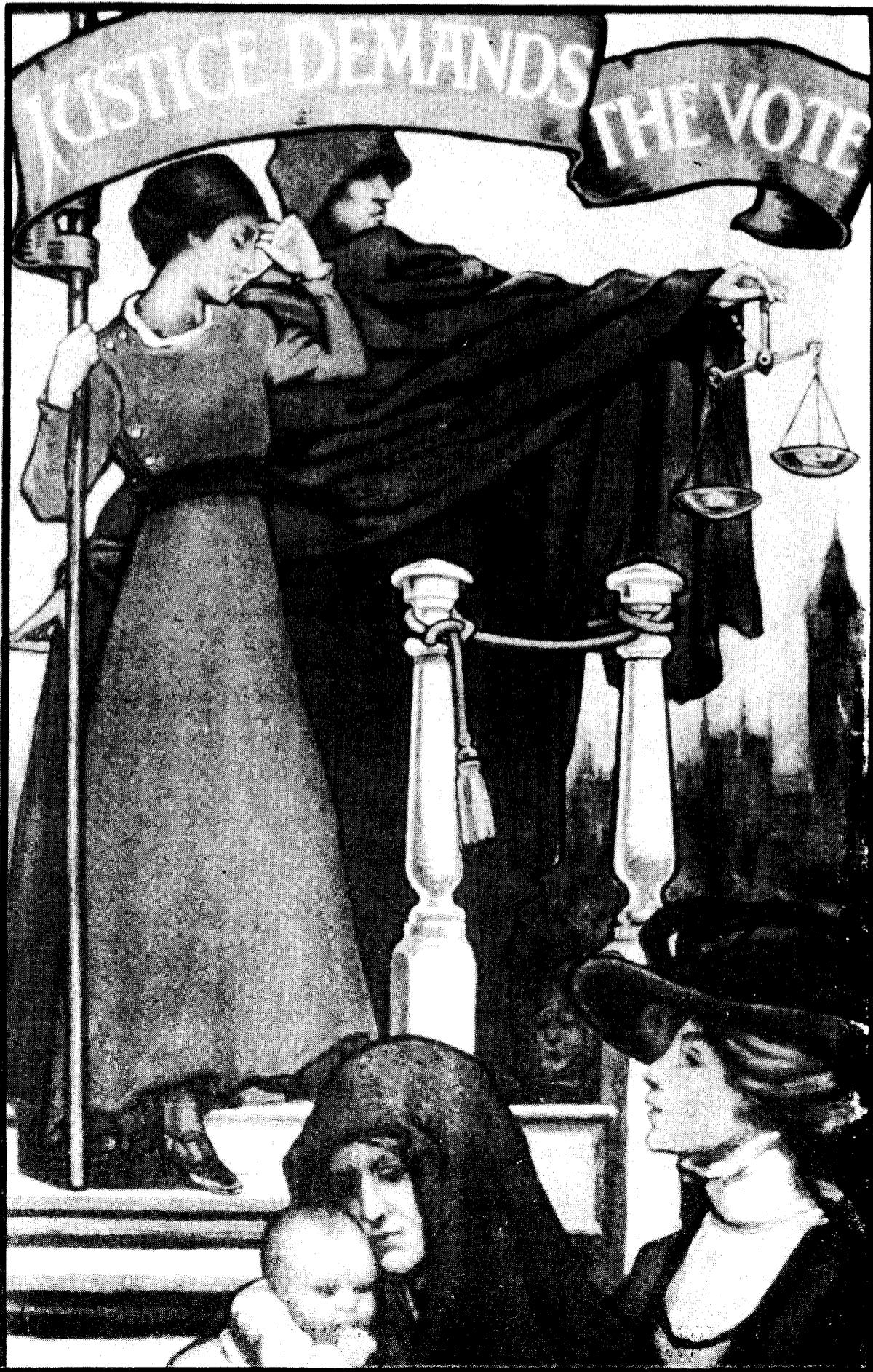
In more recent times, the 1950s and 1960s, women's organisations in the party went through a massive decline. However, this situation is starting to change, and there are now 1,200 women's sections in the party.

One reason for this is that Labour does now support the crucial issues — free abortion on request, a women's right to work and equal pay.

The battle is by no means over. The fight is still necessary both inside and outside the Labour Party to build a mass movement of working class women which will consistently take up women's needs.

For a start that means women's sections and campaigning organisations demanding that, as they did in the past, a future Labour government implement in law, a woman's right to choose, and to take up, in practice, positive discrimination in favour of women.

The truth is that women's sections and organisations should not be seen as hiving off women's interests, but as a means of spearheading the fight for women's demands.



David Howell looks at Bevanism and considers its implications for the contemporary Labour left.

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 Vincent Doherty No 1



VOTE AGAINST PARTITION

PD's election manifesto in North Dublin. Funds are still needed to offset the costs of the campaign. Donations to Peoples Democracy, 38 Clanawley Rd, Killester, Dublin 5.

in the cafeteria. A manager came up to tell her that she was there without permission. The staff crowded around her, telling her not to worry: 'He's only an Englishman, we'll sort him out.'

Whatever the vote is and whatever problems arise in the campaign it is clear that the H Block movement is taking another step forward towards the creation of a mass anti-imperialist movement that can mobilise the majority of the Irish people.

New

Almost everywhere new layers of the population have become involved in the H Block Committee election campaign.

In the Premier's own constituency in Dublin and in Limerick the Irish Trotskyists are running campaigns focussed on the H Block question in order to demonstrate as best they can how elections can be used to broaden and deepen the support for the prisoners. These campaigns will be important models when the H Block activists sort out the lessons of the movement's first intervention in elections in the South.

thern Ireland who are represented by the young H Block prisoners and hunger strikers. There is no shortage of youth here and in the H Block demonstration.'

Bernadette stressed that unlike the other candidates the prisoner candidates did not make promises, 'they can only ask for your help', but she was sure that the plain people of Ireland would understand that the cause of the prisoners was more important than begging for a few crumbs from the government: 'The politicians can only give you what is yours by right,' she said, 'You don't have to grovel for it.'

In traditionally republican north Kerry the crowd in Lishowell and Ballybunion filled the central squares and streets but here too in republican country it was Bernadette that brought out the broad support. In Ballybunion the local campaign's organiser told me that he reckoned about half the crowd came to hear her. The streets of the town were jammed for hours. She got a huge cheer when she said she knew the people of Kerry would not let the prisoners down.

Waterford

At a big training centre in Waterford the instructors welcomed her in, beaming and shaking her hand. She spoke to youths

strong that the election campaign would score successes. In Longford, a fairly small town, there was a crowd of thousands, the largest at such an occasion since the 1920s.

In Dundalk there was also a crowd of thousands. It was even more enthusiastic. There were many young people. Bernadette said: 'The papers are talking about the so-called cynicism of youth saying that they are making fun of the elections and politicians. That's not cynicism, that's common sense. They're not about to be made fools of.'

'Never in 800 years have we produced graver and more dedicated youth than the youth of Nor-

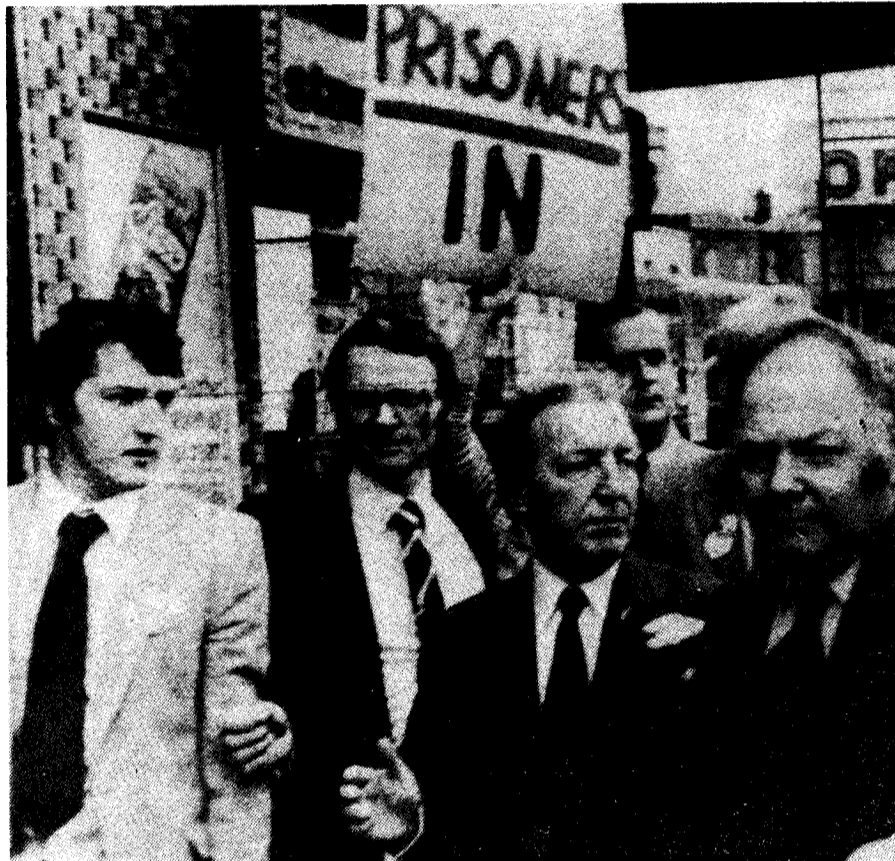


Photo: REPUBLICAN NEWS

Southern Irish election Widespread enthusiasm for H-Block campaign

By Gerry Foley in Dublin

Bernadette McAliskey was walking through the giant Waterford glass factory along with union leaders and leaders of the local H Block committee on Monday June 8. She was on the final leg of her tour through the constituencies in which H Block prisoners are standing in the 26 county general election.

Cheers came from behind all the work benches, and a great banging filled the huge workshops. She passed a row of 15-year-old apprentice glass blowers who were holding long pipes with glowing lumps of glass at the end. They greeted her demonstratively. One of them shouted, 'Speech! Speech!'

Stopping every few workbenches she was introduced to leading H Block activists throughout the factory complex where more than 3000 people work. It was obvious that she was the heroine of the immense majority of workers.

Wonderful

Many older women came up to her. I heard a number of them say variations on the theme of: 'It's wonderful to see you back, how do you feel?'

One young fellow wearing a campaign badge of Fine Gael, historically the more openly pro-imperialist of the two bourgeois parties, said: 'You know a lot of Fine Gael people are going to give their second preferences to the prisoners.'

At a lunchbreak meeting, Bernadette attacked the failure of the Labour Party to defend the people of the north against imperialist oppression.

'Frank Cluskey (head of the Labour Party) thinks that if he doesn't

mention the north, no one will notice how far he has gone from the principles of Larkin and Connolly, but the north won't go away. The British are attempting to break the heart and the soul of the people of the north but we'll never give up. There's no way back now. Once people have stood up, they can never again accept slavery.'

Slavery

In Drogheda, another industrial centre, Bernadette had spoken to a crowd of thousands in the downtown area on Friday 5 June. Paraphrasing the apostle and the martyr of revolutionary nationalism, Patrick Pearse, she said, 'We in the north can't go back now. There are worse things than death. And slavery is one of them.'

She called on the crowd to take the trade unions from the leaders that betray them and to return the workers' organisations to the forefront of the struggle.

Adoring

Bernadette was on a very tight schedule. She covered nearly six hundred miles on the first day of her tour. Back and forth across the island from Cavan to Sligo and from Sligo to Longford, Mullingar and Drogheda and that night at 8 o'clock she still had to go to Dundalk but she found it nearly im-

possible to get away. The crowd can only be described as adoring.

Despite the exhausting pace of the tour Bernadette was more and more buoyant. She had been worried, along with most other leaders of the H Block movement, about the chances for success of such an election campaign. The form was determined by the traditionalist wing of the republican movement. It made for division and prevented the H Block committees from taking full advantage of the opportunities offered to them by the election.

A list of nine prisoner candidates was drawn up, including the 4 hunger strikers and five others. The constituencies had then to be divided up between Provisional and IRSP prisoners. The traditionalists considered it to be an absolute principle not to work for any candidate that might take a seat.

Friction

That caused friction in the only Dublin constituency contested by a national H Block committee candidate. IRSP candidate, Tony O'Hara is due to be released in a few months and could conceivably take a seat if elected.

Most committee activists had wanted to run 'live' candidates, that is, candidates who could campaign, to fight elections that are much more complex than the Fermanagh-South Tyrone one was. They wanted

to stand local activists in order to use the elections most effectively to build the committees, as well as to put up personalities such as Bernadette who could be elected and use the Irish Parliament as a forum for raising the H Block issue.

In Cork City, Dave O'Connell a popular figure among the traditionalists, staged a heavy-handed operation to prevent the local committee from supporting an independent activist. It created a lot of bad feeling.

But by the time Bernadette got to Drogheda, it seemed clear that despite the problems the support for the prisoners was so



H Block protesters surround Irish premier Charles Haughey in Dublin.

Trades councils back the prisoners

By Andy Lilliey, secretary, Ealing TUC

AS MANY as 260 delegates from trades councils all over Britain held their annual conference in Southport last weekend.

The high spot was the adoption of a motion calling for steps towards a united Ireland, restoration of 'special category status' — in effect political status — for the H Block prisoners, disbandment of the Ulster Defence Regiment, a bill of rights and the withdrawal of troops to barracks pending complete withdrawal.

The motion was proposed by the Greater London Association of Trades Councils.

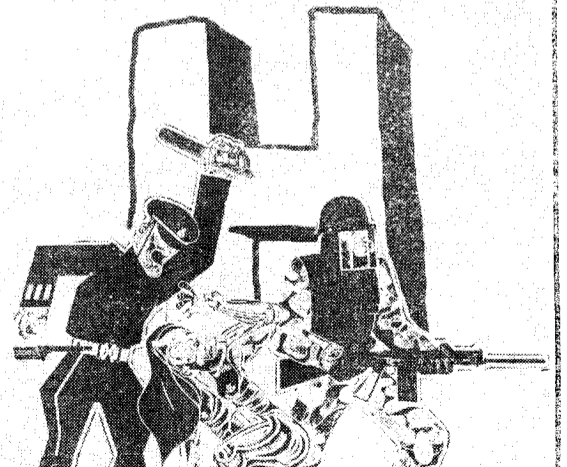
TUC general secretary Len Murray took the exceptional step of attacking the motion during his 'greetings to the conference' on Friday.

He called on delegates 'not to take sides in the conflict'. He declared that the resolution would split the trade union movement in the north of Ireland, and asked GLATC to withdraw it.

But the motion was still put and won the support of the majority of delegates.

During the debate a number of speakers supported the resolution as a step forward but criticised the failure to call for immediate troop withdrawals. Despite this weakness, the success of the resolution was another blow to the TUC and Labour Party bipartisanship with the Tories on Ireland.

Prisoners of Partition



H-BLOCK/ARMAGH

A PEOPLES DEMOCRACY PAMPHLET NEW EDITION 40p

The latest edition of the People's Democracy pamphlet on the H Blocks is now available. *Prisoners of Partition* costs 40p plus 20p postage, from Connolly Bookshop, Avoca Park, Andersonstown, Belfast 11

Labour London: 'We will stand by our programme'

THE LABOUR Greater London Council has only been in office for a couple of weeks. But in that time it has managed to hit the headlines on a number of occasions.

The Labour group plans to stop financing civil defence in London, has no intention of attending the Royal Wedding and it accommodated the People's Marchers when they were in London. And at press conference last week Labour leader, Ken Livingstone announced that he wanted to use GLC money to support Soviet dissidents.

Over the next period the GLC will either move more and more into confrontation with central government or go back on the promises made in its election manifesto.

Split

Already the Labour group has split over the proposal to pay council workers for time off to greet the People's March. Perhaps not a big difference — the group was

after all in favour of employees having time off without pay — but

Threats

because it was threats of surcharge that divided the councillors this might bode ill in the future.

Now the GLC face the problem of environment minister Michael Heseltine's punitive cuts in government subsidy with a possible massive rate rise. How will the Labour GLC respond to this? Ken Livingstone spoke to MIKE FISHER after the first full council meeting since the elections.

'We will stand by our programme. If Heseltine takes our last remaining £200m, that's the last of his penalties. It will put another £1 a week on top of the extra £2 a week the Tories have put on the rates as a result of their

cuts in London.

'So at the next general election, where Labour would be pledged to make good the Tory cuts in rate support grant, we would be saying to voters, a Labour government would mean £3 a week cut in your rates. How can the Tories answer that?

Stops

'If Heseltine tries to stop us raising revenue, that would be an attempt to stop local government. We would expect trade unionists to launch a campaign of industrial action and Labour MPs to make the continued working of parliament impossible.

But how credible is Livingstone's threat to pressurise the government by industrial action? 'We are not in a position to call for industrial action ourselves,' he concedes. 'We want to avoid the Labour GLC being seen to step into anything from the outside.



Ken Livingstone at the Socialist Challenge Rally with Soviet oppositionist Pyotr Egides last month

'Given the role of the Labour Party over the last 30 years, the Labour group at County Hall needs to win respect by what we actually do to win the right to leadership, for example by supporting all trade unionists in dispute.

We are looking for the possibility of providing funding for the Time Out occupation and giving them accommodation if they are evicted.

'This, repeated in dispute after dispute, could re-weld the links bet-

ween the Labour Party and trade unionists and we would be happy to give the same support when we get other occupations, factory closures or struggles like Grunwicks or Garners Steakhouse.

'We shall also be set-

ting up a trade union research and information service available to trade unionists.'

Ken Livingstone appears to be under no illusion as to what he can achieve at County Hall. For him the split that occurred in the Labour group over whether or not to pay council workers so they could greet the march for jobs does not change the situation.

'It has always been clear that there would be no majority in the council for any deliberate act that would lead to surcharge. Most of the Labour right don't believe that's correct and we have a large number of lawyers and barristers concerned about their professional position.

Confident

'We have a right wing but no social democrats. Any social democrats would be lost in the GLC where we have a straight choice between a socialist GLC, elected on a manifesto all Labour councillors support, and vicious Thatcherite Tories. I am confident we shall have no defections in our four year term.'

The Labour administration in London faces a difficult path over the next few months. It will face criticisms from all sides. How it will confront its critics and more important how it will stand up to the onslaught from central government remains to be seen.

But there's no doubt that Livingstone and his comrades are sincere and enthusiastic for the task they have set themselves. As Ken says: 'I'm glad we haven't got the dead weight of 900 years accumulated conservatism and routinism.' Something's certainly moving down at County Hall Westminster.

Unilateralism v multilateralism: We have to support both

BRIAN Heron (7 May) says that Socialist Challenge supporters at the CND labour movement conference in Manchester did not, as I had suggested, vote in favour of resolutions being taken in place of the scheduled afternoon discussions.

I had understood that they did because they sup-

ported the idea on the organising committee. Sorry.

On the question of unilateral versus multilateral disarmament, though, I think that Brian has got hold of the wrong end of the stick. He argues that we must choose one or the other, that it is impossible to support both and that

to do so only causes confusion.

I agree that there is great confusion over the issue but I think it is for precisely the opposite reason. The self-styled 'multilateral disarmers' (such as David Owen, William Rodgers and others) are fond of arguing that we must choose between the two.

If there is to be a choice, multilateral disarmament sounds much more attractive than mere unilateralism. 'Surely it's better for everyone to

disarm than just one?' And this is reflected in the opinion polls.

The idea that the choice of multilateral disarmament actually exists as a practical alternative is used as an excuse for endless cop-outs of the 'of course I believe in disarmament, but...' variety.

That old fence-sitter, the *Guardian*, reckoned that the Labour Party has contradicted itself by backing both unilateral and multilateral disarmament. No doubt

'multilateralists' Brynmor John will claim that this 'contradiction' allows him to stay as shadow defence minister although he does not support unilateral disarmament. It's not on and we have to make that clear both to him and Michael Foot.

By saying 'a unilateralist is a multilateralist who means it', Frank Allaun wasn't going soft on unilateralism. He was putting the multilateralists on the spot: you are either for disarmament or against it

and that is the only choice.

If you are for it, then it is clear that unilateral disarmament is now essential, both in its own right and to get the multilateral process going. The claim that there is a choice between multilateralism and unilateralism is actually the cause of the public's confusion not only allows NATO apologists to parade as 'disarmers' but it even allows them to give the impression that CND is somehow against anyone but Britain giving up nuclear weapons!

We want rid of all nuclear weapons worldwide and, as a start, we want rid of all those in Britain. If unilateral disarmament encourages multilateral disarmament, then so much the better.

It is the people who claim that the two are separate, that multilateral disarmament is possible without unilateral disarmament that we should direct our arguments against. It's a tricky argument but I think Frank Allaun got it right.

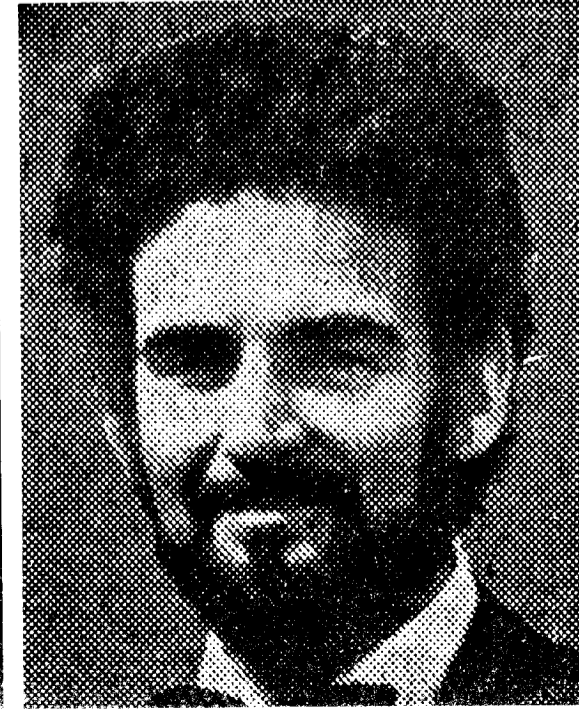
ALISDAIR BEAL
Leeds 8

It was obscene how the press tried to implicate Sonia Sutcliffe in his crime. She was said to dominate him on her prison visits, she was mentally ill in 1976 and — talk about scraping the barrel — she went out with an icecream man when she was doing her A levels before she was married.

Sutcliffe's father has even claimed that the killings would never have happened if he'd married any other woman. They want to blame another woman for these women's deaths. It's not his fault.

Many people are genuinely baffled by such a case and it is up to a paper with a feminist understanding to give a clear analysis to its readers.

Marcella Fitzgerald
NW London



Letters letters LETTERS

Sutcliffe: a product of our society

I'VE BEEN surprised and disappointed by the lack of coverage in Socialist Challenge of the Sutcliffe trial.

All the bourgeois media has been full of the gory details of how Peter Sutcliffe went round with a bag of sharpened screwdrivers, knives and hammers, killed thirteen women, and attacked

seven others without knowing one of them personally.

As he said when arrested, no woman was safe while he was around. He killed them because they were women.

The trial centred on whether or not Sutcliffe was mad because everyone wants to disown this monster. He's either an individual madman or just

plain bad'.

Neither explanation confronts the fact that Peter Sutcliffe is a product of this society where women are cast in the role of sex objects. If we don't dress up for men we're frigid; if we do we're tarts.

Women are beaten up by their husbands, whistled after in the street and used in pornography. From Eve through the ages to women in adverts for diesel pumps, women are portrayed as luring men through sex to do something they wouldn't do otherwise — duping them:

When Sutcliffe was supposedly duped out of £10 by a woman he'd paid to have sex with, it wasn't this one incident but how this incident was indicative of the way women cheat and deceive men, that set him off on his mission with all the zeal of the Witchfinder General.

Because neither the legal system nor the media can afford to analyse how society produced a Peter Sutcliffe, they're forced to argue that he hated and killed women because of his individual relationship with one woman — his wife.



NEW CROSS MASSACRE CHAIRPERSON JOHN LA

'They have to deal with the ga of Babylon the police, the a judges, the courts. It gives t different sense of their polit

'We are quite capable of fighting our own battles.'

The facts of the terrible fire at 439 New Cross Road earlier this year are well-known. Thirteen black youths at Yvonne Ruddock's 16th birthday party lost their lives; several more received injuries, and their families and friends will never be the same again.

The black community had reason to believe that the fire was caused by a firebomb, and sees it as part of a series of violent racist incidents in the area.

In response to the attempts by the police and press to cover up the real story the New Cross Massacre Action Committee was formed. John La Rose, its national chairperson, spoke to Toni Gorton about the campaign, its future plans, and how the black working class views the fight against racist violence.

How did you get involved in the events around the fire?

I was in a routine meeting of the Black Parents Movement when we heard the news and decided to investigate. Three of us saw Mrs Ruddock (who lost her children Yvonne and Paul) that same evening. Alex Pascall of *Black Londoners* did an interview for his radio programme.

In spite of her agony and suffering she spoke to us because she had already heard radio reports that weren't true.

She said that it had been a peaceful party. There had been no fights. It was the first party she had given in the house. She'd made a special concession to her daughter, Yvonne for her 16th birthday and she was glad she had because she had never seen her so happy before.

She was very clear about what she thought had happened — that it was a firebomb. Two police officers at different times had told her this.

Already a number of West Indian organisations and papers had been in the area: such as *West Indian World* and the *West Indian Standing Conference* — we weren't the only ones.

The WISC had already called a public meeting the following Sunday. We intervened and suggested that there should be a

preparatory meeting on 20 January. 300 people attended. This established the New Cross Massacre Action Committee and part of its work became known as the Black People's Assembly.

People came from as far away as the Midlands. It really gave the black community some idea of what had taken place not from the press but from people like Lesley Morris and Carl Wright who were at the party.

A nurse who had received the victims at the hospital spoke. That meeting showed the extent of the concern in the community at what had taken place.

Who was involved in NCMAC?

You can imagine the range of voices on that question. The decision was that the Committee would be open to Asians, Africans and West Indians — all black people for the purpose of directing the campaign.

The Assembly should be open to all those who supported the general aims of the campaign. The Assembly made recommendations and the Committee took the decisions about how to carry them through.

PACM-Headstart (Pan African Congress Movement) said that only West Indian

blacks should be involved. From the first meeting this position was rejected, despite this some Asians and whites were threatened. Stewards took action against it but we could never get a commitment from PACM-Headstart to stop.

How did the campaign develop?

We knew it would go through certain phases. The press had played down the issue after two days. So we knew that the attitude of the press and the state would be dependent on the reaction of the black community.

The public meeting on 25 January was important. 2000 people turned up and from further north — not just the Midlands, but Bradford, Huddersfield, Leeds and Manchester.

Sybil Phoenix, a local community worker, planned a demonstration in collaboration with the police to go from the rally to 439 New Cross Road. Once there she began to sing 'We shall overcome'.

But this wasn't a civil rights movement like in the 60s. They would like it to be but it isn't. Anyway the reggae songs are much more vital.

When she moved away from the house on the route she had planned with the police only 50 people followed her.

The others said no and remained blocking the road outside the house for 3 or 4 hours. This destroyed the plans of the police to bring the black community behind the Community Relations Councils and Committee for Racial Equality.

We see these as a colonial office for blacks in British society. Their purpose is to undermine the independent struggle of blacks.

How do you see the Black Peoples Day of Action?

This was an historic event. The decision to hold it came from the NCMAC on 27 January. The decision was to show the determination of the black population that they will not be killed, maimed or injured with impunity and that if the state



'Black People's Day of Action on 2 March 1981 was an historic event'



Police in Southall, A

would not protect its citizens then the black population and its allies in the country would.

Can you say what you think of the inquiry and the next stage of the campaign?

The inquest was obviously an important event for the police. The press, like the *Observer* and the *Sunday Times* sought to tell the black community that what was being said about the massacre being a racist attack wasn't true. The truth was something else. The truth was the police story.

We knew that a grandstand play would be made at the inquest where the police would attempt to elaborate their

theories in a way which would be convincing to the population and to the blacks who had demonstrated on the Black Peoples Day of Action on 2 March.

It failed because I don't think the police and the coroner and those behind them really realised the extent to which the NCMAC was prepared. It had been prepared since the 20 January when both the NCMAC and the fact-finding commission were established.

This commission investigated what had happened and it also found out about the methods that the police were using to obtain their information and their line of investigation.

Eventually all that became public knowledge at the time of the inquiry.

The police had a political motive in trying to prove that this was not a racist attack. If they had admitted it was a firebomb then it wouldn't have been 15-20,000 marching in the streets but 100,000. It was this they sought to prevent. It would be a march to protest police failure to stem racist attacks like the recent one in Coventry.

It is a matter for serious consideration that the coroner, Dr Davies, a leading coroner in Britain, should have shown bias and incompetence to the extent that he did.

The parents sought an injunction against him for his summing up, the reading of police evidence rather than notes which he had failed to take. It was admitted by Justice

ACTION COMMITTEE ROSE INTERVIEWED

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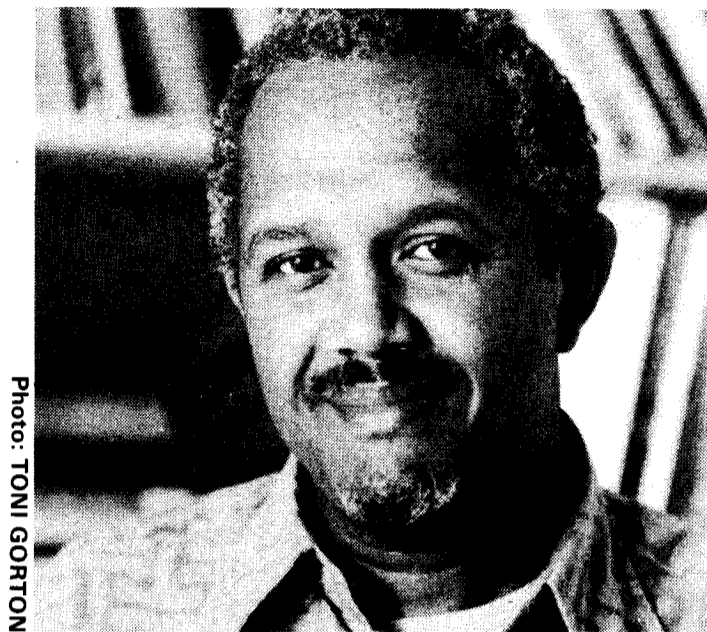


Photo: TONI GORTON

John La Rose is a Trinidad-born publisher and poet. He is the chairperson of the New Cross Massacre Action Committee. He is also a member of the Alliance of the Black Parents Movement, the Black Youth Movement and the Race Today Collective.



'Blacks would march to protest police failure to stem racist attacks like the recent one in Coventry'



...the most serious and violent attacks come from the police.'

Comyn that the coroner had acted with gross irregularity. The bias had been shown.

The open verdict was unsatisfactory to the families. On the evidence that had been shown it was clear that the police had failed to look for the truth about what had happened.

The police weren't satisfied with the verdict either, they had concentrated their efforts into their story of the fire starting as a result of a fight at the party. The parents immediately called for a new inquest and as soon as they receive the transcripts or the summing up they will lodge an appeal.

The Action Committee will be organising an international commission of inquiry within the next few weeks, after consultation around the country.

All the youths said that they had been bullied and coerced into making those statements which they retracted. Are there any moves to charge the police with illegal activity?

Not that I know of. What would happen is that the police would investigate themselves and find themselves without blemish.

How do you see the problem of racist violence and right wing groups?

For the black community the most serious and violent attacks come from the police. The actions of the National Front and other right wing groups complement that violence.

The state confers its authority and arbitrary powers on the police.

The Blair Peach inquiry showed how the Special Patrol Group was itself acting illegally with all sorts of instruments against all those who they regarded as offensive to the state.

How should black people fight the police and right wing groups?

There are two ways. One is the way you fight in Brixton. You organise, attack and disappear because to expose yourself at all after an event like the Brixton insurrection is to invite virtual annihilation. Or like in New Cross where you can have a huge political effect on society by the nature of the political organisation you have.

I believe the most advanced form of warfare is political warfare, not military. There are sections of the black population who say that you have to be as organised as the police. I don't disagree with that but I see it as important to win over politically those sections of the working class who, like the black working class and unemployed, suffer at the hands of the police, the judges, the courts.

We have to organise politically to fight police violence — in terms of organising day by day against cases of repression.

Black political action defines itself in relation to the work place and in terms of its naked relationship to the state.

Donations are still needed for the work of the Action Committee. Send them to New Cross Massacre Action Committee, 74 Shakespeare Road, London SE24. Tel 01-737 2268.

Most of the black youth and unemployed when they move against their oppression immediately come up against the state. So they're on the street or in an insurrection like Bristol or Brixton.

If you're in the workplace you have your union meetings, then you have to find a way of getting around your district secretary and finally you're up against management. There are all these layers between you and your ultimate oppressor — the state.

The minute the black youth and unemployed act they come up against the oppressive nature of the state and they are very clear — this is Babylon.

And they have to deal with the gatemen of Babylon — the police, the army, the judges, the courts. It gives them a different sense of their politics.

It's not the same with the Asian working class. They have a strong middle class.

The West Indian community hasn't got an economically strong middle class. There is no part of the West Indian community that can regulate its conduct. It doesn't exist.

The state would like to create an effective group to control the black working class and unemployed. But it can't and therefore the black unemployed create a serious problem.

What do you think of the role of anti-racist groups which seem to be usually white?

Yes, black people don't normally participate in them. I wouldn't say that they don't have a function.

Because racist violence comes from whites, then the extent to which these groups can mobilise white workers and sections of the white middle classes against these people then they can be important in creating alliances between the struggles of the black and white working classes. But if you ex-

said, 'We are the majority at Fords'. Certain forms of conduct have been observed at Fords Dagenham as when they had that internal insurrection a couple of years ago and broke the place up.

Where they have power over production as in textiles, various parts of engineering works, service industries, it does confer on the black working class a power to influence the situation politically that we need to have.

For example who have overthrown British Governments or forced them to make U-turns in recent times — miners.

Tony Benn said recently that black people should come into the Labour Party, organise separately if they want to and affiliate as a body.

The 'Tory' state rules whoever is in the government — be it Labour or Conservative. You couldn't live in a colony as I did and believe that the Labour Party was a radical or anti-imperialist party.

The Labour Party has always been seen as an alternative that will staunch the rebellion of the working class when it becomes restive.

What makes the situation different now is this, that the crisis in the LP is part of the crisis in society.

In my opinion the party has to split and split again to make it a reliable instrument of activity for the working class.

One supports the general direction of the Labour Party towards a radical socialist party. The situation that Tony Benn is part of will lead to a greater radicalisation and democratisation in the Labour Party and the trade unions which have been a functional part of the LP.

These developments are of great importance for the black working class and unemployed as they are for the white. Black people may take up Benn's appeal when it becomes more real than it is at the moment.

Whatever else is said the problems facing the British state today are the Irish national liberation war, the unemployed and the restless working class. It is the coalescing of all these struggles that will make for serious change in Britain.

In some industries two thirds of the workforce is black. Do you see that they have more force in society than the unemployed?

Yes, an issue of *Race Today*

The fight for socialist policies in industry 27-8 June, London

Socialist Challenge

REVOLUTION

Industrial Workers Conference

London 27-8 June

Entry by ticket only from PO Box 50, London N1 2XP

IN this conference organised by Socialist Challenge and the youth paper Revolution, supporters will discuss how to fight for socialist policies in industry.

The main session on Saturday morning, 'Fighting for socialist policies in industry', will attempt to map out the opportunities which exist for winning the battle for socialist ideas.

In the afternoon there will be a panel of leading militants in the various industries which will attempt to draw the lessons of the fight against redundancies.

We hope to have militants from BL, steel, mines, British Telecoms, Lee Jeans and the People's March among others.

The Sunday morning session will take up the theme 'Building a party of worker revolutionaries'.

Conference will then break into workshops which will include:

- The role of the industrial working class in the socialist revolution. Building a proletarian women's movement and the fight for positive action.

- Constructing a class struggle left wing in the labour movement; the experience of the Minority Movement.

- Building a class struggle left wing:

Trotskyists and the Teamsters union in the USA in the '30s.

- The role of black workers.

To end the conference Socialist Challenge supporters in the various industries will meet to discuss the next practical steps to be taken in building a party and the class struggle left wing in the labour movement.

Saturday evening rally celebrates the 1st anniversary of Revolution Youth with international youth speakers.

REVOLUTION YOUTH

Hear speakers from: Grenada, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Ireland, French revolutionary youth, Youth CND, Revolution Youth.

First Anniversary

Rally

SATURDAY 27 June 7.30pm £1

CAXTON HOUSE 129 ST JOHN'S WAY LONDON N19 (near Archway Tube Stn)

Building a proletarian women's movement

By Denny Fitzpatrick, POEU

OVER the last decade there has been a tremendous growth in the movement fighting for women's rights inside the labour movement. There have been momentous struggles for equal pay — from the Fords women machinists to the women at Tricos, West London and SEI in Manchester. And women industrial workers have led some of the most militant disputes of recent years — from Grunwicks to the current Lee Jeans occupation in Greenock.

Together with the campaigns from the women's liberation movement these struggles forced the trade unions to take women's rights seriously. Now there are countless advisory committees, women's conferences, booklets and general literature throughout the labour movement.

For the trade union leaders the answer to women's oppression was the passing of the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts. There was no need to struggle, the Labour government would look after women's interests. Over the five years later these measures are shown to be woefully inadequate.

Pay

Today women's unemployment is still double that of men. Women's pay is only 73 per cent of men's pay and the gap is widening. New measures to defend women's rights are being sought.

Positive action is the new catch word. All sorts of people are organising around it. The TUC recently sponsored a national union conference on positive action, so too did the NCCL. The women's TUC have produced a report for the next TUC congress. It calls for the TUC to recognise that women suffer from past discrimination and therefore that compensatory measures need to be taken.

We believe that a movement must be built for women's rights based in the working class. The fact that the TUC backed the anti-Corrie abortion bill made it ten times harder for the Tories and other reactionaries to oppose women's rights.

Women will obviously be the best fighters against their own oppression, but they are not the only ones who will gain from it. It's the bosses and the Tories who gain by a divided trade union movement segregated by sex and colour.

When women's wages

are depressed or their jobs go to the wall it doesn't boost men's wages or give them jobs. Nor did the equal pay struggles of the 1970s lower men's pay. On the contrary it was a boost

for all low paid workers, giving the lie to the idea that positive action for women unfairly discriminates against men.

The fight for positive action challenges the way

in which the education system and the bosses condemn women to being second class citizens. A strong organised movement for women's rights, particularly the right to work and the right to choose, is a threat to all those who benefit from pitting one section of workers against another.

It is also a threat to those reformist leaders who attempt to work within the bosses' system to iron out inequalities by paltry measures and empty promises.

Fighting for women's rights is part of the fight to build a new leadership within the labour movement capable of uniting all the workers' struggles into a successful challenge to the whole capitalist setup.

Role

We are confident that such a leadership can be built and that working class women will play a major role in its creation.

Ten years ago it would

Why I am coming to the Industrial Workers Conference

By Hazel MacPherson, Paddington No. 1 National Union of Railwaymen

MY union, the NUR, is part of the Triple Alliance of rail, coal, and steel workers. This alliance has already showed its potential strength when the miners took on Thatcher and with the support of the rail and steelworkers, beat her. The combined strength of these three unions could quite easily get rid of the government altogether, but the top leaders refuse to mobilise it.

Campaigning left wings need to be built in every union to deal with the sabotage of the officials. This means involving and reaching out to the whole membership in every struggle and in every debate. The left in the NUR must stick its nose into the Labour Party.

Our General Secretary, Mr Weighell, has launched a campaign of his own — against the left inside the Labour Party. This has drawn NUR members into a political debate on an unprecedented scale. No less than 18 resolutions supporting the left and the gains on party democracy appear on this year's agenda of our Annual General Meeting (conference).

The division between politics and trade unionism is beginning to break down. If we want to defeat Thatcher's government, then we have to challenge our own leaderships. We need to have as full a political understanding on our side as does Weighell from the point of view of management.

Socialist Challenge is the only newspaper of the left that consistently makes the links between politics on a national and international level and the daily struggles in the workplace.

From what I can see, this conference will be discussing those issues that workers themselves are raising every day, especially those who have the least to gain from the present system and the most to gain from change — black workers, women and youth.

Bernard Connelly, Convenor S. Yorkshire Crafts, British Steel.

I welcome this conference of Socialist Challenge as an opportunity to discuss out the lessons we've learned in the fight against the Tories.

The steel strike experience showed that if we are to use our massive power effectively, then we need a clear-sighted leadership. The Sirs and Chapples of this world have to be got rid of. This can only be done by fighting from inside the big powerful unions.

It is excellent that Socialist Challenge supporters are concentrating their energies on industry. Let's hope that this conference will be one step in ensuring that when the next big battles break out Socialist Challenge is not only operating from the outside but also from the inside. You don't only need correct ideas, but the people ready to carry them out who are in the right place at the right time.

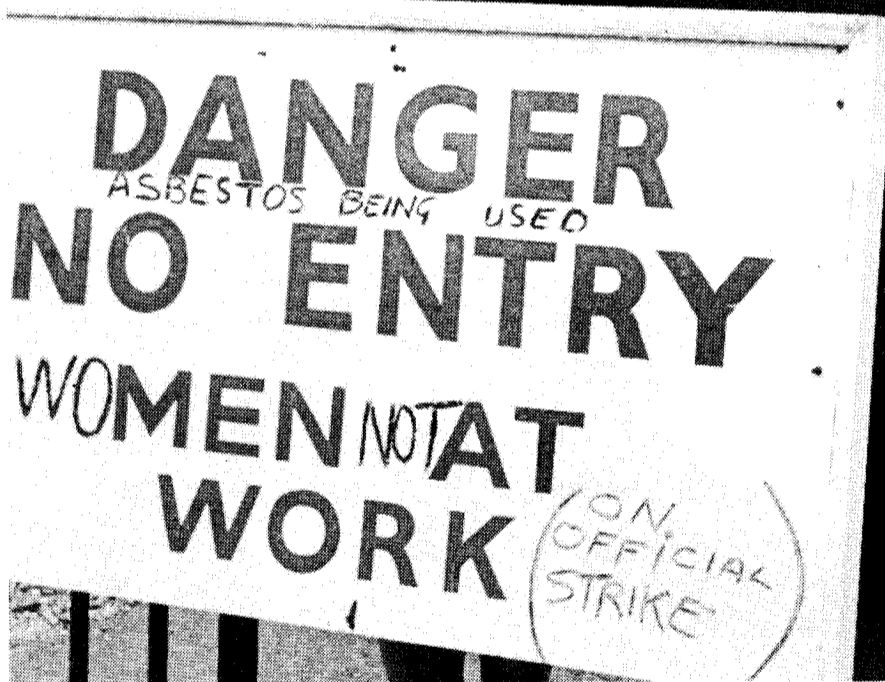
I will be speaking in the session on the fight against redundancies. I think we have to look not only at the big successes like the miners but also some of the failures like in steel. We have suffered some big knocks, but we are not completely out.

If the lessons can be drawn by a sufficiently large minority to fight for policies which are in our interests, then everything we have had inflicted on us won't be in vain. Socialist Challenge has had the merit of raising some of these policies and this is why I'll be there to debate them out further.

have seemed impossible for the TUC to call a national demonstration on abortion, which shows how rapidly consciousness is changing on women's rights. And today the Lee Jeans women are in the forefront of the fight against the Tories unemployment policies.

Fighting for positive

action for women's rights is central to challenging the whole of the Tories' offensive against the working class. Building a proletarian women's movement based in the industrial unions is the best guarantee that such a movement will be a powerful weapon in the struggle for women's liberation and socialism.



Women at Trico vote to reject the management's pay offer

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

Women's Rights

National Abortion Campaign

We have to make choices

By Ann Potter

THE NATIONAL Abortion Campaign is holding its conference in Manchester on the weekend. It comes at a time of massive attacks on abortion rights throughout the world.

Eleven Spanish women went on trial last week for performing or having abortions. In the United States the Helms-Hyde Bill is currently being debated which, if passed, will define abortion as murder.

In Britain, parliamentary attacks on abortion rights have been successfully defeated by the pro-choice movement. Yet despite our success in this country, women still face attacks from the DHSS, the courts and through cuts in public expenditure.

The National Abortion Campaign has to decide how to continue to defend existing abortion rights and to fight for better facilities if women are to have more control over their fertility and their lives.

The experiences women face in other countries has a direct bearing on the choices facing

NAC. The main debate at the conference is whether or not NAC takes up contraception as a major campaigning issue.

In some ways this has immediate appeal: there is a feeling that we can do very little on abortion rights during the lifetime of a Tory government. NAC is a very successful campaign and because of the close links between abortion and contraception we should campaign around this issue as well. But such an approach misses the point.

The right to abortion in this country is still under attack; indeed, it is still the main way the state attacks a woman's right to control her fertility and her life. Contraception may be inefficient and in many ways downright harmful, but the right to contraception is not under attack.

NAC cannot stretch its limited resources to defending and extending abortion rights and also take on board the issue of contraception as well. We must make choices.

To ensure we defend our gains and obtain better provision for abortion we have to campaign for better legislation. This fight has to begin now with the support of the forthcoming Facilities Bill. We need to put pressure on the Labour Party, particularly at its conference this year, to commit itself to improve abortion legislation when it next comes into office.

NAC has to continue along the road for free abortion on demand, a women's choice. That's the choice NAC should make.



We want to march for a women's right to work

By Judy Watson

'EVERY struggle is just a spit in the ocean, but if we all spit together we'll drown the bastards.'

These words from Eisie Broad, who is on strike at Royal Pride in Manchester, summed up the achievements of the festival for women's rights held last month.

Over three thousand women attended the festival, and it was the first step in bringing us together to fight the onslaught of this Tory government.

Unity, self-organisation, and women fighting back were the themes of the day. Now we have to decide what's next.

How do we build on the gains not only of the festival, but of the struggles it reflected — the fight at Lee Jeans, the People's March for Jobs, the campaign for abortion rights, the struggle of women in Ireland, and others?

Call

A clear message from the festival was a call on the Labour Party and the TUC to organise a demonstration on a woman's right to work.

Among the sponsors for this call are: Jo Richardson, Michael Foot, Tony Benn, Arthur Scargill, Spare Rib, the National Child Care Campaign, and the Labour Party's national women's committee.

Involve

The right to work is crucial to women's fight for freedom and independence, and it involves the right to choose on abortion, the provision of nurseries, an end to discrimination against les-

our ability to work is greatly restricted.

The call for a woman's right to work march should be put to the TUC General Council, which meets at the end of the month, and to the National Labour Women's Conference, which starts on 14 June — we should see that it is!



We want to build on the united action between

the women's and labour movements that we saw at the festival, and at the labour movement conference for positive legislation on abortion. We need the kind of unity shown in the unemployment marches in Liverpool, Glasgow and London.

Such action is required to take forward the struggle for women's rights against the Tories, and to raise the demands we want the next Labour government to implement.

An action committee for a woman's right to work has been set up from the festival planning group.

What you can do

- Sponsor the call for the demo and send letters of support or resolutions, from your women's groups or labour movement organisations.

- Distribute model resolutions and leaflets available from the action committee.

- Collect petition signatures.

- Come to the next action committee meeting to help co-ordinate the call. Contact the Action Committee for a Women's Right to Work at a Festival Planning Group, 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1.

Ladies need not apply

A SOCIALIST Challenge supporter, Alison Guest recently took a firm to an industrial tribunal for discrimination and as your reporter JUDITH ARKWRIGHT shows the case revealed more about the law than it did about the company concerned....

The case of Alison Guest v Alpine Soft Drinks was in the words of the chairman (sic) of the Tribunal Lady French 'an open and shut case'. Ms Guest had phoned up for a driver's job in February to be told by the depot manager that the firm did not employ ladies because they could not lift crates and the job involved jumping in and out of vans all day.

This gentleman did not appear to have considered how arduous many of the jobs which women do — nursing, cleaning, lifting heavy loads of shopping — can be and did not appear to have heard of the Sex Discrimination Act.

Laugh

So the assembled feminists and friends hardly contained their laughter when the solitary representative of the firm admitted that the company had discriminated. He tried to argue that this was a mistake and all the fault of the depot manager who had 'mishandled' the telephone 'conversation' with Ms Guest.

Alison was awarded £166 to compensate for loss of earnings and her application for damages in relation to injury to feelings was turned down.

The National Council for Civil Liberties, which took up the case on Alison's behalf are going to appeal against the latter decision and the decision not to award full costs, which were funded by the Equal Opportunities Commission. But it is the inadequacies of the law itself that is highlighted in such a case.

In the United States if a woman takes a case to court and wins then she wins on the basis of 'class action' which means that the jurisdiction does cover all the women who have been discriminated against by the firm in question and compensation is awarded.

The massive fines really do hit the company hard. The basis of the law is to assume that society does discriminate and to compensate women for past discrimination.

After such a case the firm would be required to draw up a target for employing women in the future.

Alison Guest may have won her case but there is no guarantee that the firm will cease to discriminate. It employs 400 drivers who are all men but as Lady French herself expressed rather angrily, 'The fact that the company have discriminated against other people is not within the jurisdiction of this body. You can't have your cake and eat it!'

Crumbs

Under the existing law we barely get the crumbs under the table.

The Daily Mail (21 May) carried a story about a young man who had applied to a tribunal against discrimination on grounds of sex. He won the case, was awarded costs for injury to feelings and was headlined in the Daily Mail.

The so-called discrimination against the young man was the fact that the employer preferred women because they were a source of cheap labour. We women can't win.



London Immigration Action Group
Public meeting

Deportation & Repatriation

12 June 6.30

Friends House, Euston Road, London WC1E 6BT

Where you can buy Socialist Challenge

Scotland

ABERDEEN: SC available at Boom Books, King St. For more info phone Bill 896 284.
DUNDEE: SC available from Dundee City Square outside Boots, Thur 4-5.30pm, Fri 4-5.30pm, Sat 10-12pm.
EDINBURGH: SC sold Thur 4-5.15pm Bus Station, St Andrews Square and bottom of Waverley steps 4.30-5.30; Sat 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forrest Rd. More info on local activity from SC c/o Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.
GLASGOW: SC sales every Thur/Fri 4.30-5.30pm at Central Station. Also available at Barretts, Byres Rd; Clyde Books, High St; Glasgow Bookshop Collective, Cresswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.
HAMILTON: SC on sale 8-11 every Sat outside County Bar Almada Street, every Sat outside Safeway 11.30-5. For more info contact Paul, 1st Clyde View or John at 54 Eliot St, Hamilton.

Wales

BANGOR: Sat 10-12 town centre.
CARDIFF: every Sat in Bute Town 10.30-12. Also available 1-0.8 Books, Salisbury Road.
NEWPORT: every Sat in town centre 11-12.30.
PONTYPRIDD: SC sales every Sat outside Open Market 11-1pm.
SWANSEA: SC sales outside Co-op, 11-12.30, 11am-1pm, Saturdays.

England

BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-5pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.
BIRMINGHAM: SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-0669.
BRADFORD: SC at Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Sandgate.
BRISTOL: SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in the Ground', Haymarket. More info Box 2, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 6.
BURNLEY: SC on sale every Sat 11-12.30-1pm St James St.
CHESTERFIELD: SC sold outside Bonis, Marketplace, Sat 11.30am-2.30pm.
COVENTRY: SC available from Aedea Bookshop. For more info about local activities phone 461138.
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD: SC sales in The Square, Sat 10.30-1.30pm.
HUDDERSFIELD: SC sold Sat 11am-1pm. The Piazza. SC also available at Peaceworks.
LEEDS: Sat 11-1 at Lands Lane Pedestrian Precinct and 10.30-12.00 at Headingley Arndale Centre. Corner Bookshop, Woodhouse Lane.

MANCHESTER SC sold 11-1pm Sat at OLDHAM outside the Yorkshire Bank, High St; at BURY in the shopping precinct and at Metro Books; at BOLTON in the town centre; and in MANCHESTER outside the central reference library in St Peter's Square and at Grassroots and Percival's Bookshop. Tel: 061-236 4905 for further info.
NEWCASTLE: SC on sale every Sat 11-1pm outside Fenwicks. Also available at Days of Hope bookshop, Westgate Rd. For more info phone Phil or Pete on Newcastle 73750.
OLDHAM: SC sold every Saturday outside Yorkshire Bank, High Street. For more information about local activities, Tel. 061-682 5151.
OXFORD: SC sold 11-12.2pm outside Kings Arms and every Sat 10.30-12.30pm in Cornmarket.
SHEFFIELD: SC on sale Thursday, Pond St, 4.30-6pm; Saturday, Fargate 10.30-12.30pm.
STAFFORD: SC on Sale Market Sq Sat lunch-time.
STOCKPORT: SC sold every Saturday 11-1pm, Mersey Way. Can be delivered weekly; phone 483 8909 (evening), 236 4905 (day).
SWINDON: SC on sale 11-1 every Sat, Regent St (Brunel Centre).
TEESSIDE: SC on sale Sat lunchtime in the Cleveland Centre, and in Newfare, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, and outside Woolworths on Stockton High Street.
WOLVERHAMPTON: SC sales on Thur/Fri at Poly Students Union from noon-2pm and British Rail 4.30-6pm; and Saturday near Beatties, town centre from 11am-2pm.
YORK: on sale every Thursday, dole office Clifford Street, 9.30-11; University Vanburgh College 12-2; Saturday at Coney Street 11-1.

Bookshops

BANGOR: Rainbows, Hollyhead Road, Upper Bangor, Gwynedd.
BRADFORD: Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Sandgate.
BRIGHTON: The Public House, Little Preston St.
BIRMINGHAM: Other Bookshop, 37 Digbeth, Birmingham.
DURHAM: Durham City Co-op Bookshop, 85a New Elvet.
ILFORD: South Essex Bookshop, 335 Le Street.
MILTON KEYNES: Oakleaf Books, 39 Church Street, Oakleaf.
OXFORD: EOA Books, 34 Cowley Rd.
LIVERPOOL: News from Nowhere, 30 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1

LONDON: Central Books, 37 Grays Inn Rd; Colletts, Charing Cross Rd, WC2; Paperback Books, Brixton and Charlottetown; Kilburn Bookshop, Kilburn High St, Road, NW6; The Bookplace, Peckham High St, SE15; Books Plus, Lewisham; Balham Food Co-op; Housmans, 5 Caledonian Rd, N1; Compendium, Camden Town NW1; Owl, Kentish Town; New Beacon, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Bookmarks, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Centreprise, 126 Kingsland High St, E8; Dillons, QMC; Page One, E15; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Reading Matters, Wood Green next to Sainsbury's.
YORK: Community Books, Walmgate.

What's Left

RATES for What's Left: 5p per word or £4 per col. inch. Deadline: noon Sat. prior to publication. Payment in advance. Phone 01-369 8180.

BOOKS for Southern Africa. Funds urgently needed — cheques, POs to Books for Southern Africa, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.
T-SHIRTS: 'Solidarnosc' symbol, red on white, 'Jobs not Bombs' red on black on white or yellow — all in small, medium and large. Women's symbol red on yellow, black on red, Fourth International symbol, red on white, red on yellow, black on red — medium and large. All above £2.99 p&p. 'Fight racism' small only, red on white — only £1.50 incl. p&p. Orders to SCD T-Shirts PO Box 50, London N1. Cheques payable to 'The Week'. Bulk order prices on request.

TURKEY Solidarity Campaign Bulletin No.4 now out. With four-page supplement on Kurdistan. Free large sea from TSC, BM Box 565, London WC1N 3XX.

IMG notices

ANTI-RACIST fraction. Sunday 14 June, 11am, Birmingham. Agenda: Report on perspectives. Defence of the lessons of Deptford, Brixton and Coventry. The Nationality Act and deportations. Building the new workers conference. For more details.

WOMEN'S Liberation work — next fraction on 18 July in London. Venue to be announced.
SAC conference — mtg for all SC co-ordinators on 12 June, 8pm, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester. Ring Jude on 01-559 8371 if unable to attend.

SC Events

BARINGEY: Public meeting, 'Can we and unfree ever be at peace?' Tues 22 June, 7.30pm. TU Centre (Old Library), Brabant Rd, Wood Green, London N22. Speaker from TOM and Geoff Bell (Socialist Challenge).

BADGES: Make money for your organisation or branch. Huge reductions on anti-racist, Irish solidarity, women's badges and many more. Write for lists of incredibly low bulk rates — from as little as 5p. Free offers for large orders. Send to: SCD Badges, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.
SUBVERT the Royal Holiday! Badges: July 29 — General Strike against the monarchy! Gold on black. 25p each. Postage 14p (up to 10 badges). Discount for bookshops etc. Hudson Pace Graphics, 95a Bolingbroke Grove, London SW11.

TURKEY Solidarity Campaign Bulletin No.4 now out. With four-page supplement on Kurdistan. Free large sea from TSC, BM Box 565, London WC1N 3XX.

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Making bread

VICTOR CABRAL looks at an exposé of the grain industry in the first of an occasional series of reviews of books that readers might have missed when they first came out.

WHO has heard of Cargill, Continental, Bunge, Louis Dreyfus and Andre? What do the names of Michel Fribourg, Bernard Steinweg, Ben Nordemann, Georges Andre, Jorge Born, Willard Sparks, Milan Sladek, Walter Klein or Leonard Alderson mean to you? If nothing at all, then read Dan Morgan's *Merchants of Grain*.

This probes into the history of the five enormous private transnational companies that trade the bulk of the world's internationally-marketed grain; the seven families that run these companies, and the ways in which they manipulate the world grain processing and distribution systems, wielding considerable influence, including over the US government.

Secrecy

These companies have, for years, shrouded their operations behind a veil of secrecy. Michel Fribourg, President of Continental Grain, once said he would rather lose a million dollars than get his name in the papers, and his company has never published a company brochure.

Details about the finances of these companies rarely come into public view. Their profits have been enormous. Over the 1970-76 period, Cargill reputedly made \$886m after tax in its worldwide operations.

The international grain

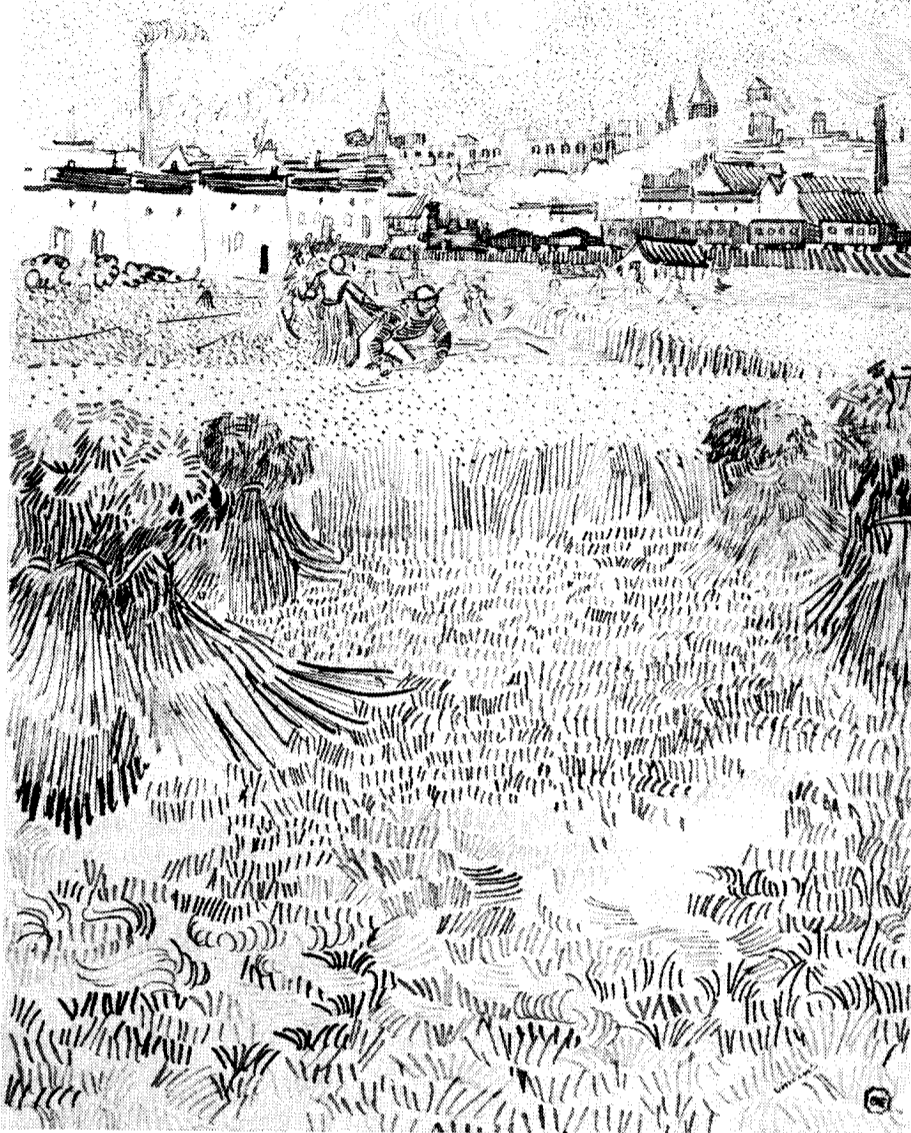
trade has expanded considerably over the last two decades from 30m tons in 1960 to 180m in 1978, and is now worth about \$50 billion. These five companies account for about 85 per cent of all grain exported from the United States. They also count for a large proportion of the grain exports of the other major exporting countries, and handle about 90 per cent of the EEC's trade in wheat and maize.

Access

Although the companies have substantial investments in grain loading and storage installations, shipping, transportation and grain processing on all continents their strength is their access to trading capital. The companies all have lines of credit in eight or nine figures at dozens of banks. As of November 1977, Cargill had investments in and loans outstanding to subsidiaries and affiliates, totalling more than \$754m, using 43 banks, with an open line of credit for at least \$300m in unsecured, short-term borrowing.

Systems

Other factors that have helped the companies to continue to prosper are their well-developed private information systems on the global grain trade,



Van Gogh's 'View of cornfields', 1888. The grain merchants now hide their operations

and their ability to effect swift transactions through their private connections.

Over a period in which many large family companies have developed broader-based corporate structures, these companies have remained successful family-dominated transnationals, gaining some of their success from the family loyalties of top executives, and the ability to make large swift transactions on the nod with trustworthy relatives.

Dan Morgan's style of anecdotal investigative journalism provides a very readable account of a

number of major grain trading 'coups', backed up by detailed information on personalities and events, and placed in the context of more general developments in the history of the world grain trade.

Nevertheless, he is very conscious that this work is only a pioneering effort. He observes that 'multinational scholarship of the kind required for inquiry into a subject like the grain trade is still in its infancy'.

As US Senator Frank Church said regarding the companies: 'No one knows how they operate, what their profits are,

what they pay in taxes and what effect they have on foreign policy — or much of anything else about them.'

If these five grain transnationals' power is to be limited, increased research into their operations is needed, as well as a constant vigilance over their activities, followed by organised international political action. Dan Morgan's book stands as a valuable primer in this activity.

**Merchants of Grain* by Dan Morgan. Widenfeld and Nicholson £10.

Office work is dangerous

By Pam Singer

I AM typing this article on to a flickering visual display unity. If I don't take a ten-minute break after it's finished, I will leave work with eye strain, a stiff neck, backache, headache — and a foul temper. And people say office work is 'soft'!

Because typewriters and filing cabinets are not likely to cause dramatic occupational accidents, there has been little study of the health problem suffered by office workers.

The British Society for Social Responsibility in Science's *Office Workers Survival Handbook* breaks new ground in presenting such information and in giving detailed guidance on how to fight for improved conditions. On both counts, the book is excellent.

Its starting point is that we have a right to a safe and healthy work environ-

ment, and that an economic system which puts profits above workers' health is the root cause of poor conditions.

The first section establishes the legitimacy of a rarely recognised occupational hazard — stress. It points out how the particular problem that women workers face — the double work day, low pay, sexual harassment, lack of adequate rest time — compound the stress due to overcrowding, shifts, constant noise, that all office workers suffer.

The book goes on to cover the surprising number of health hazards caused by office environment (such as lighting, chemicals, temperature and ventilation) and physical layout.

There is a section entirely devoted to exploring the new problems caused by the rapid expansion of new technology.

The book is not simply a catalogue of office hor-

rors. In its own words, 'a practical and political tool'. Every chapter provides well-researched data, illustrations, and checklists on recognising hidden health hazards (such as poor lighting, fumes from photocopiers), and step-by-step guidance on how to use every available recourse — practical, organisational and legal.

There are examples of how successful struggles have been conducted. A sample health survey, a list of resource addresses, and a comprehensive bibliography are appended.

The book states unequivocally that the answer does not lie in individuals avoiding nasty-smelling Tippex, but in collective organisation and struggle. The final chapter, therefore, outlines the procedure for forming a union, and for forming women's groups inside existing unions.

This handbook is a 'must'!

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LEON TROTSKY

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International

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Socialists lawsuit exposes more dirty tricks

By Tom Martin in New York City

AS opposition grows to its policies the Reagan administration is floating a series of measures designed to gag all dissent. Every one of them has come up in the SWP/YSA lawsuit to stop the US government's harassment and disruption programme against them.

* A new Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism (SST) has begun open hearings. 'Terrorism' is the new code word of the Reagan administration to justify every repressive action it commits or supports.

Senator John East explained at an SST hearing: 'It would seem that in order to track terrorism adequately and for an in-

telligence or law enforcement agency to predict the occurrence of terrorism, it would have to have some surveillance of legal and non-violent support.'

* A sustained attempt is under way to dismantle the Freedom of Information Act, under which the government was forced to release some of the files detailing its disruption of the legitimate political ac-

tion. The Freedom of Information Act has been repealed.

* A measure called the Intelligence Identities Protection Act is currently working its way through Congress. The specific aim of this piece of legislation is to protect informers — such as the hundreds who spied on the SWP and YSA during the FBI's 40-year-long investigation. According to the *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, the bill 'would prevent an organisation from exposing and expelling an FBI informer discovered in its midst'.

All these moves boil

down to one thing: the Reagan administration is openly prepared to ride roughshod over democratic rights in order to crush opposition to its war drive. This was made abundantly clear in court with the testimony of Justice Department official Robert Keuch last week.

Reasons

According to Keuch the real reason behind the government's massive investigation of the SWP was 'the inherent power and responsibilities of the President', referred to in a court opinion some years ago which noted 'that the President of the United

States has a fundamental duty under Article 2, Section 1 of the Constitution to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.'

Powers

Keuch explained with reference to the SWP and YSA: 'I believe it was that inherent power that the President was exercising in 1936 and the successive presidents and successive attorneys general have exercised and utilised in authorising investigations into those organisations and individuals who could potentially fall into or who could indeed take unlawful or unconstitu-

tional means to change the form of government ...'

In other words, the government can do what it wants, when it wants, and to whom it wants. And it isn't accountable to anybody. No wonder a growing number of people aren't too happy about this 'form of government' and want to change it.

When the government resorts to police state methods it does so from a position of weakness, not strength. And every twist and turn it is forced to make in court in response to the charges of the SWP and YSA only undermines its position further.

26 May 1981



Reagan's government: spies on any opposition

South Africa's Republic Day

By N 'Ndabeni

WHILE South Africa's white ruling class celebrated 20 years of the apartheid republic on 31 May, the black victims of the system marked the occasion in their own way.

In Johannesburg, fire bombs exploded while the republic was displaying its military might. Several bombs exploded across the country during the week preceding the 'celebration'. At a mass demonstration in Soweto, the South African flag was burned before heavily armed police were able to disperse the chanting protesters.

On the campus of Witwatersrand (Johannesburg) University, black and white opponents of apartheid joined in protest demonstrations and burning the national flag. Students at the University of Cape Town clashed with right-wing supporters of the white ruling class.

Significant

But by far the most significant demonstration of growing black power was on the industrial front. The current strike wave began in the first week of May, when 2,000 black workers at British Leyland in Cape Town came out on strike. They were protesting because the pay rise agreed by the National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers of South Africa (NUMARW) last December came nowhere near to meeting soaring inflation, especially the big increases in the cost of food and other essentials. They demanded a 25 cents increase to R2.00 (£1.20) an hour.

The Leyland bosses refused to meet the union to discuss its demands, accusing the union of breaking the December agreement. They sacked all the striking workers and offered to re-hire them on an individual basis. The company claims that some 1,500 have returned to work and that production has been resumed.

Ford

Strikes have also broken out at Ford and General Motors. This was in solidarity with 160 Firestone workers, members of MACWUSA, the Motor Assembly and

Component Workers Union of South Africa, sacked in January. Ford and General Motors workers have refused to handle Firestone tyres. Some 1,000 Firestone workers have also now joined the strike.

Solidarity

The solidarity actions in particular show the rapidly developing consciousness of the workers. This is a powerful weapon in breaking down the inter-tribal hostilities which the ruling class has tried to foster ever since imperialism established its first foothold on South African soil.

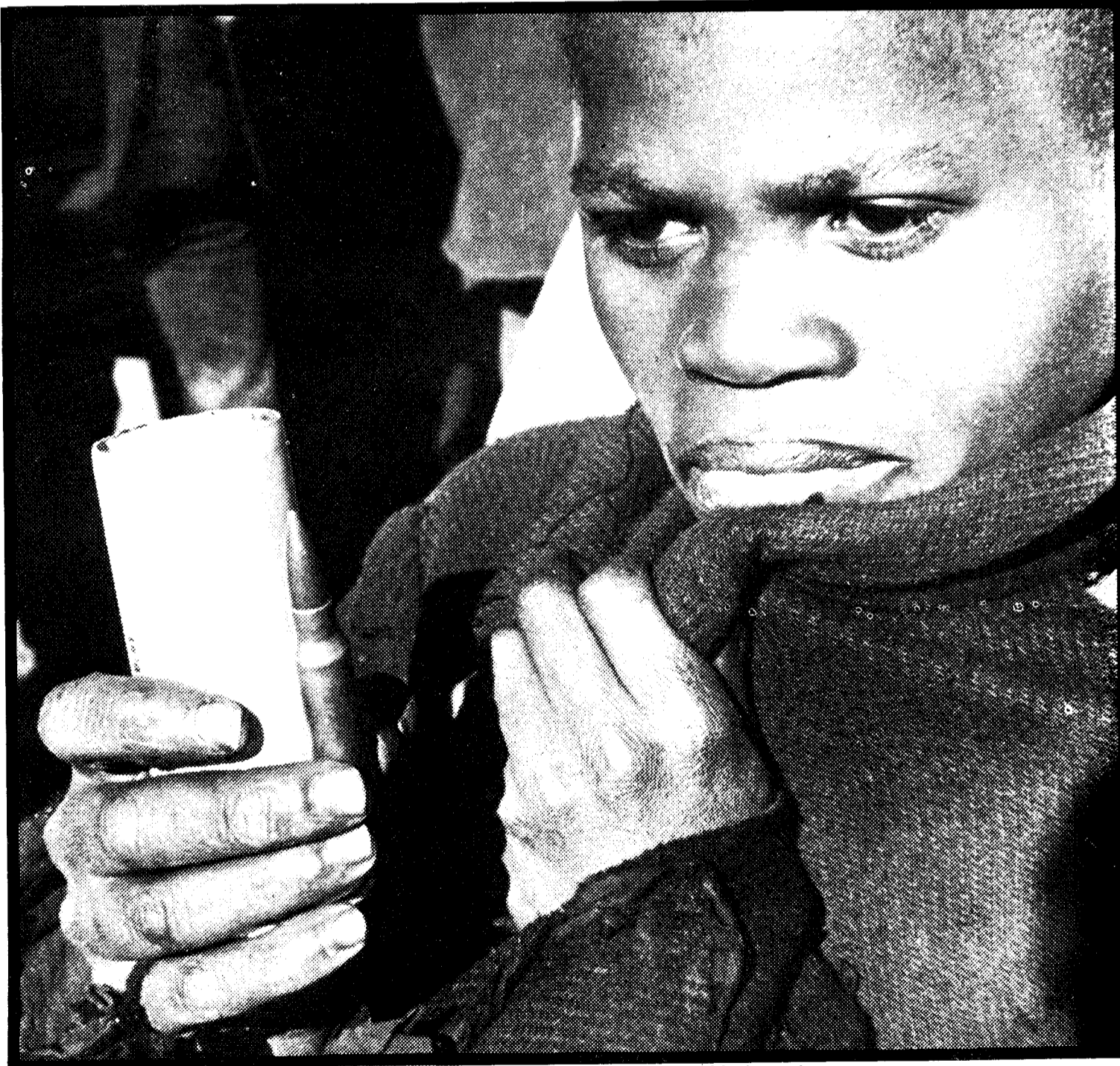
While writing these lines, news is coming through of the demonstration by over a thousand black students in the 'coloured' townships of Newclare and Newlands near Johannesburg. It began as a peaceful demonstration demanding the release of the President of the Student Representative Council at Christian Botha School in Newclare. Aziz Jardine was detained about two weeks ago.

Students

Under South Africa's draconian laws he can be held indefinitely without charge or access to lawyers or relatives. The marching students carried banners demanding 'A People's Republic' and 'Freedom Now'. Despite the non-violent stance adopted by the demonstrators, the police were soon on the scene with sjamboks (rhino whips), batons, tear gas guns and dogs. Many were injured and nearly 60 arrested.

The growing hostility to the apartheid regime displayed in the weeks leading up to 'Republic Day' has frightened the government into dropping their 'reformist/moderate' mask and resorting to the harshest repression. The black Bishop of Johannesburg, Bishop Tutu, has been placed under house arrest.

Banning orders have



South African child holds up tear gas canister and bullet used by police to repress black revolt.

been issued against prominent black trade union leaders and Catholic priest, Father Shomang, a leading member of the Black Priests Solidarity Group working in Soweto, was arrested and brought manacled in leg irons to his mission to collect his clothes.

The British labour movement and especially the workers in Leyland, Ford, Firestone and Rowntree must give their full support to their fellow

workers in South Africa who are fighting the same enemy — capitalism.

Miners

At the Buffelsfontein gold mine, more than 1,500 black miners, most of them contract workers from the Transkei and Lesotho, refused to come off shift in protest at long hours. These workers are not in any union but they showed exceptional solidarity, staying under-

ground for 24 hours. When they came out they were met by riot police and dogs. All of them were sacked and sent back home.

Textile workers at Estcourt, Natal, have gone back to work under protest, following a strike for wage increases. Management has agreed to recognise the union — the National Union of Textile Workers.

Workers at Rowntree chocolate factory near

Port Elizabeth are also on strike, demanding pay increases and better conditions. Strikers wear badges with the slogan 'Spit out the gum, chum!'

Strength

South African capitalism and imperialist investments in South Africa are almost wholly dependent on the super-exploitation of black labour for their massive

profits. This is the foundation on which the apartheid state is constructed. The growing realisation by tens of thousands of black workers that their industrial strength is a bigger threat to white rule than the occasional fire bomb is of historic significance.

In South Africa the class struggle of workers against capitalism and the fight for self-determination by all the black people is inextricably interwoven.

The Soviet sabre rattlers are at it again

By Davy Jones



LAST weekend the Soviet leaders sent a strongly-worded communique to the Polish Communist Party insisting that they make no more concessions to the workers.

The latest threat comes in the wake of a decision by Solidarity to stage warning strikes this Thursday in four major cities. This is to protest against the authorities' failure to speedily bring to justice those responsible for the Bydgoszcz affair in March, when Solidarity activists were beaten up by the political police.

Bydgoszcz, Rakowski protested: 'Why does no one say publicly that Rulewski is a classical demagogue?'

The Soviet bureaucrats have good grounds for worrying. In the last two weeks three events have further undermined their domination in Poland. First, the police officers have petitioned to form their own independent trade union affiliated to Solidarity nationally.

Polish deputy premier Mieczyslaw Rakowski has weighed in behind the Soviet threat accusing Solidarity of wanting to put the authority of the state and party on trial. In a scurrilous attack on Jan Rulewski, a leading member of Solidarity who was badly beaten at

The rank and file police officers have been profoundly affected by the hostility of the workers, particularly since the Bydgoszcz affair. An anonymous spokesperson explained the demand for their own union thus: 'We

don't want to be manipulated in the name of the passing interests of faceless high up officials.'

Then came the pronouncements of the ill-fated Katowice forum. This motley group of hardline Stalinists issued an appeal denouncing the 'ragamuffins and scoundrels' in Solidarity who were 'undermining socialism'. This was music to the ears of the Soviet leaders who rushed to embrace the grouping's every utterance.

remarks. The group itself rapidly issued a new statement welcoming aspects of Poland's 'democratic renewal' before dissolving itself entirely.

The final blow which caused great gnashing of the Soviet leaders' teeth was the release on Friday 5 June of four dissident members of the nationalist Confederation of an Independent Poland. A massive campaign had been launched for their release: in numerous parts of the country people had gone on hunger strike on 20 May and students across the country had held protest demonstra-

Kiss

Such support however is the kiss of death in Poland and acknowledged sympathisers of the group queued up to disassociate themselves from its

Aim

What the Soviet rulers fear most is the undermining of the undemocratic iron rule of the Communist Party over the Polish workers. Not only have political prisoners been released, has censorship been partially lifted and independent trade unions and a peasants' union been set up, but now reforms are hitting the Communist Party itself.

The party congress scheduled for mid-July is likely to be a strange affair. Instead of the delegates being handpicked from the top as in the past they will all have been elected from the workplaces and the party rank and file.

Even politburo members are having to stand as delegates for the congress in order to be re-elected to the central committee. To date only two politburo members have secured their election — both identified with the party's more radical wing.

Links

The Soviet leaders and their Polish counterparts will use constant pressure and intimidation over the coming weeks to break up the unity and determination of the Polish workers. At both the party congress and the first Solidarity conference in August the workers will try to consolidate the gains of the last year in institutional reforms and elections for new leaders. It is this process which the Soviet leaders fear.

To ensure that their threats are not translated into action the labour movement in this country should develop its links with the Polish workers and demand Soviet hands off Poland.

Photo: NEWSLINE



Discussion at Solidarity meeting

For a government of the workers' parties in France

By Alain Krivine, from *Rouge*, weekly paper of the French Revolutionary Communist League (LCR)

AN IMMENSE hope has been born. The French workers have just won a considerable victory. They went through the 1968 general strike, and then years of struggles and battles, often carried out under difficult conditions, before they succeeded in defeating the bourgeoisie's parties and opening a new period.

The victory of Francois Mitterand shows not simply that the majority rejected the policies that Giscard and the bosses have been carrying out for seven years. It also expresses a desire for radical change, a desire to do away with a society that exploits and oppresses the workers.

The LCR threw all its forces into this battle. From the beginning of the campaign we explained that Giscard could be beaten.

We knew that, because of the policies of the CP and SP, the defeat of the right in the elections would not resolve all the problems. But we were convinced that it would give the workers new confidence, that it would create a new, and much more favourable, situation for the growth of workers' mobilisations and the achievement of workers' unity in struggles.

Joy

Our analysis was confirmed by the explosion of joy that greeted the election results on the evening of 10 May, and by the fact that CP leaders felt they had to attend these

exclusively of the CP and SP, without any bourgeois ministers. The workers must demand that this government begin to attack the real power of the bosses by carrying out the radical measures that the current situation demands — especially the thirty-five hour workweek without any cut in pay.

Strength

To carry out all these measures effectively, the workers can only rely on their own strength. They will have to discuss their concrete demands in united general assemblies. Mitterand proposed drawing up a balance sheet of the seven years, but who is better able to draw up a balance sheet of the situation in the factories and the most pressing needs of the working class than the workers themselves?

The LCR addresses itself to the thousands of workers who have participated with us in the battle for workers' unity and the battle to get rid of Giscard. Together we have just won an initial victory.

Fragile

We know very well that this victory is still fragile, that the bourgeoisie is still in place, with its hands on the levers of political and economic control. CP-leader Georges Marchais and newly-elected President Francois Mitterand are not ready to really confront the bourgeoisie.

Today the LCR faces immense responsibilities because the decisive battles still lie ahead. For these battles to be successful there has to be a powerful revolutionary communist organisation, rooted in the workplaces.

The May 10 victory can lead to others. It can lead to the victory of socialism.

demonstrations. It was further confirmed by the new tone that the CP leadership is using.

Following this initial victory, the desire for unity is more powerful than ever. Millions of workers feel that now anything has become possible. Because of the failure of the May 1968 general strike and the 1978 legislative elections, there is a real feeling of distrust of the CP and SP leaders. Millions of people are wondering what guarantees there are that this time things will turn out better.

Unity

The only guarantee is the organised strength of the workers, their unity, their own initiatives. It is important now that everything possible be done to make sure that the workers' parties win a majority in parliament so they won't have any excuses for not carrying out the demands of the workers and the people. With this majority in parliament, the CP and SP must form a government composed of their two parties alone.

The LCR will demand the immediate formation of a government made up



Above: Solidarity negotiates with the government; below: Walesa arrives for Consultative Commission conference. On the left, vice-chair Andrzej Gwiazda discusses with Jacek Kuron.



One worker's overtime is another's job

A MAJOR scandal concerning overtime working has hit Ford's Dagenham — where thousands of workers in the Foundry and Engine plants have been on short time working for most of the past year.

On Thursday 4 June, senior stewards in the Engine plant took to a shop stewards meeting the company's argument for overtime working on the Cortina engine assembly line (OHC) and in the related machining areas which supply it with components.

This disgraceful proposal was accepted despite the bitter opposition of the OHC stewards themselves. The company's 'need' for overtime working arises from the fact that in June alone 500 engine plant workers are being transferred to the Body

and Assembly plants. This means that in little more than a year around one-third of the 5000 jobs in the Engine plant have been lost. Amongst the present 500 transfers is nearly one half of the current OHC work force.

Unable to maintain production in these circumstances, Ford wants 10 hours a day working so it can run the OHC line at half speed while other people are trained

By Mick Drake, Ford Dagenham

to do the displaced workers' jobs.

The situation is even worse in the machining areas where the number of shifts is being reduced from three to two and the workers on the remaining two shifts are being asked to work ten hours a day plus Saturdays and Sundays. This is the clearest demonstration that one worker's overtime is another worker's job.

In effect Engine plant

management is exporting its lay offs to the Body and Assembly plants. By allowing it to happen senior stewards have kissed goodbye to another 500 jobs.

Unfortunately, the union leadership in the Engine plant is typical of that across the Dagenham estate, which has seen 5000 jobs disappear in the past year.

Overtime work today is a guarantee of more layoffs and sackings tomorrow.

From Faslane to Glasgow—a big success!

By Des Tierney

THE Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament received a massive boost this weekend in Scotland. Over 20,000 demonstrators took part in the 26 mile march from the nuclear submarine base at Faslane to Glasgow.

CND branches from all over Britain were present and they were joined by trade union and Labour Party branches and student unions.

The march was overwhelmingly made up of young people and the most popular chant 'Jobs not bombs — kick the Tories out' reflected their anger at the present level of youth unemployment.

The march ended with a concert and rally in Glasgow's Kelvingrove Park. Speakers at the rally included Jimmy Milne, general secretary of the Scottish TUC, and Helen Liddell, secretary of the Labour Party in Scotland.

Muscle

Ron Todd of the transport workers union emphasised that the success of the campaign depended on the involvement of the trade unions and their use of their 'industrial muscle' to stop deployment of the cruise missiles.

Margo McDonald leading Scottish nationalist received prolonged applause for her call to end the NATO alliance.

However the longest applause went to a speaker who was unable to be present, Tony Benn who sent a telegram wishing the



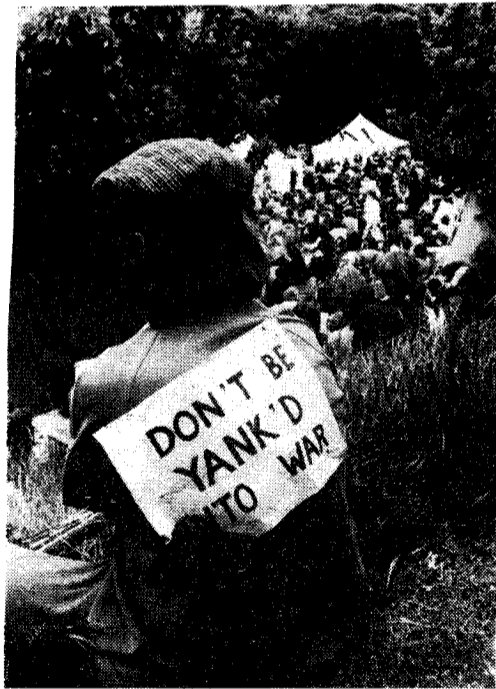
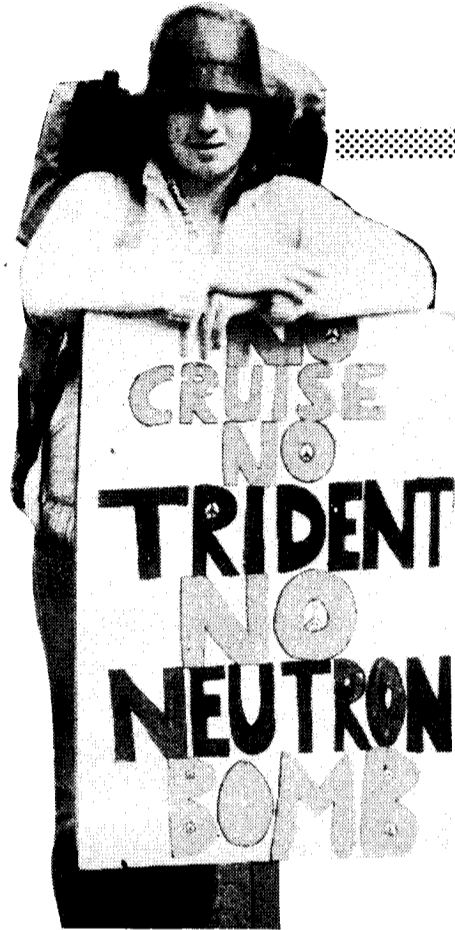
CND leaves Clydebank 7 June

marchers success. Undoubtedly those present realised that it's through Benn's campaign in the Labour Party that the best chance on nuclear disarmament exists.

Taking advantage of the makeup of the march, supporters of youth CND distributed 10,000 leaflets

building for the Scottish YCND weekend of action on 27-28 June. And collecting names for local YCND branches.

For more details about the Scottish Youth CND weekend of action write to: Edinburgh YCND c/o The Smiling Sun Bookshop, West Nicholson Street, Edinburgh, or phone Raph on 031-557 0718.



At the rally in Glasgow



Going through Clydebank mainly youth on the march

Photos: DAVID GORDON

Civil service — all-out strike now!

By Phil Dexter, CPSA Newcastle

THE civil service dispute is now, incredibly, in its 14th week, and decision time has arrived.

The government is hell bent on sticking to its cash limit. The Tories are out to smash the civil service trade unions.

The unions' selective action has bitten hard, but it has not been enough to win. The four main unions involved — CPSA, SCPS, IRSS, and the CSU — have called for an all-out strike, which ought to be both immediate and indefinite.

Although the selective action policy has worn down the membership, we have no choice. We either accept the 7 per cent offer (while MPs have awarded themselves 18 per cent) or we fight to win.

If we lose this battle we are set to be smashed for years to come, and management will be able to force through massive job loss through the introduction of new technology and public expenditure cuts.

The Council of Civil Service Unions must act and win this dispute. The propaganda against us will be enormous and we'll need solidarity from other unions.

Despite the leadership shown so far, the civil service trade union membership has grown up in this dispute. Like the miners, we can prove that the Tory government can be beaten.

Left press under attack

By Tessa van Gelderen

LONDON Labour Briefing is a monthly bulletin of the Labour left in London. It has played an important role in securing the victory of the left in the Greater London Council as well as the radical policies adopted in the London Labour Party's manifesto for the election.

Last week it came under attack. First the *Daily Mail* had a go because the latest issue carried an article on the events in Brixton. The *Mail* was horrified with statements such as 'the street fighting was excellent but could have been (and, hopefully in future, will be) better organised' and 'There are occasions when in defence of genuine legality and democracy, insurrectionary methods become necessary.'

Thatcher was quick to seize on the *Daily Mail's* article. At Question Time on Tuesday last week she claimed *London Labour Briefing* was 'irresponsible and dangerous'.

Graham Bash, *Briefing's* editor, made the following statement to Socialist Challenge:

The contribution in *London Labour Briefing* on the subject of Brixton demonstrated that the responsibility for what occurred was that of the police who entered Brixton as an army of occupation. The people of Brixton



took the streets to defend themselves and their democratic rights against police violence. It is our right and our duty as socialists and members of the labour movement to defend the people of Brixton and our statement of support for them is unequivocal.

It is nonsense to say that we have incited them to riot. The incitement has come from the government and the police.

An MP has already referred the offending article to the Attorney General and there is a possibility of the Director of Public Prosecution being brought in. An attempt to stifle the left press must be vigorously opposed by the labour movement.

Time Out staff stay out for pay equality

LONDONERS may be forgiven for thinking that nihilism has finally struck street corners in the capital, where a bulletin apparently called 'Not' is being handed out to passers by.

Its full title was 'Not Time Out', until a High Court writ last week necessitated the obliteration of those last two words.

The bulletin is produced by the 64 staff members of the London weekly magazine, who have now been on strike for five weeks to defend what is probably a unique trade union agreement.

It ensures that they are all on the same pay — currently £8,700 — which to some extent eliminates the 'pecking order' common to commercial publications.

The agreement also gives the chapel, representing NUJ, SOGAT, and NGA members, the right to be consulted over commercial ventures dreamt up by *Time Out* proprietor Tony Elliott.

The magazine has an annual turnover of £3m a year, and Elliott has long been in search of a role for his money and himself. Hence his anxiety to end the agreement.

The three unions have made the all-out strike official, and provided cash comes in, the staff are in a stronger position to sit out the dispute than their redundant boss.

Send your cash and messages to: Helen Mackintosh, *Time Out* order' chapel, 314 Gray's Inn Rd, London WC1.

Socialist Challenge



Israeli terrorists strike again

EVEN Israel's best friends have been embarrassed by the Zionist state's bombing of Iraq's nuclear power plant, just east of Baghdad.

The US State Department said it 'condemns' the raid, 'the unprecedented character of which cannot but seriously add to the already tense situation in the area.'

The British Foreign Office has been similarly critical, and even Israel's best friend in the Middle East, Egypt's President Sadat, said the raid was 'grave, irresponsible and unjustified'.

None of which will make the slightest difference to the Israeli government.

Prime Minister Begin knows that the US will continue to supply Israel with the F-4 Phantom jet fighter-bombers which were used on the raid, and knows too that the Egyptian president will continue his sell-out of the Palestinian people.

Begin, should he wish, could also point out that he was only putting into practice the theory of the 'pre-emptive strike' which has been elaborated by Ronald Reagan and his advisors in relation to the Soviet Union and the revolutionary upsurges in Central America.

Certainly, the US government is upset by the Israeli action. For some time, the State Department and the CIA have been buttering up to the despotic Iraqi regime, hoping it will take over the role of 'policeman' of the Gulf, formally held by the Shah of Iran.

The Israeli bombing will hardly help to push Iraq into such an openly pro-Western position.

But one effect of the raid is to underline the real nature of the state of Israel.

In order to 'defend itself' it has, within the last couple of weeks, continued to supply arms to the neo-fascist Phalange Party in the Lebanon, threatened to bomb Syria, murdered a representative of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation in Brussels, and now, notched up a new world 'first' by bombing a nuclear power plant.

And they dare to call those who resist such aggression 'terrorists'.

IRELAND: STOP THATCHER'S MASS MURDER

By Geoff Bell
MARGARET Thatcher at last seems to have come up with a 'solution' to the crisis in the H Blocks of Long Kesh prison camp in the north of Ireland.

Her solution is to sanction the death of every single political prisoner in the H Blocks. If Thatcher isn't stopped this will mean that anything up to 400 prisoners will die.

This is the consequence of the Tory government's continued refusal to concede the five just demands the Irish political prisoners are making.

Faced with the government's intransigence, and encouraged by the world-wide sympathy for their cause, the prisoners have now decided that there is no other course open to them but to begin what amounts to a mass hunger strike.

On Monday, Tom McIlwee became the tenth prisoner to take part in the hunger strike started in March by Bobby Sands.

Four prisoners have already died, and to underline the dedication felt by the prisoners, it was announced last weekend that two more H Block inmates will join the strike every week until Thatcher gives way.

Death

The prisoners have declared: 'We feel that this escalation is necessary because the existing four-man relay strategy allows the British a recuperation period during which they enjoy a lessening of pressure and can callously prepare for the death of the hunger strikers.'

The escalation will ensure that no respite occurs.

The British government will claim that the prisoners are committing suicide — a view echoed in the Parliamentary Labour Party, whose leaders seem intent on proving how 'loyal' an 'Opposition' they are when it comes to Ireland. The government will go to extraordinary lengths to get this false message across.

This week ITV dropped a film on the hunger strike. The IBA had apparently objected to a clip which showed one of the dead hunger strikers, Patsy O'Hara, in his coffin.

Truth

This blatant censorship is all too typical of the hypocrisy of the British establishment who talk about 'democracy' on the one hand, and allow duly elected MPs to die on the other.

But the truth of the H Block situation is now being accepted internationally. In a recent survey conducted by the *Sunday Times* only one out of 64 international newspaper editors gave unconditional support to Thatcher — and he was the editor of a

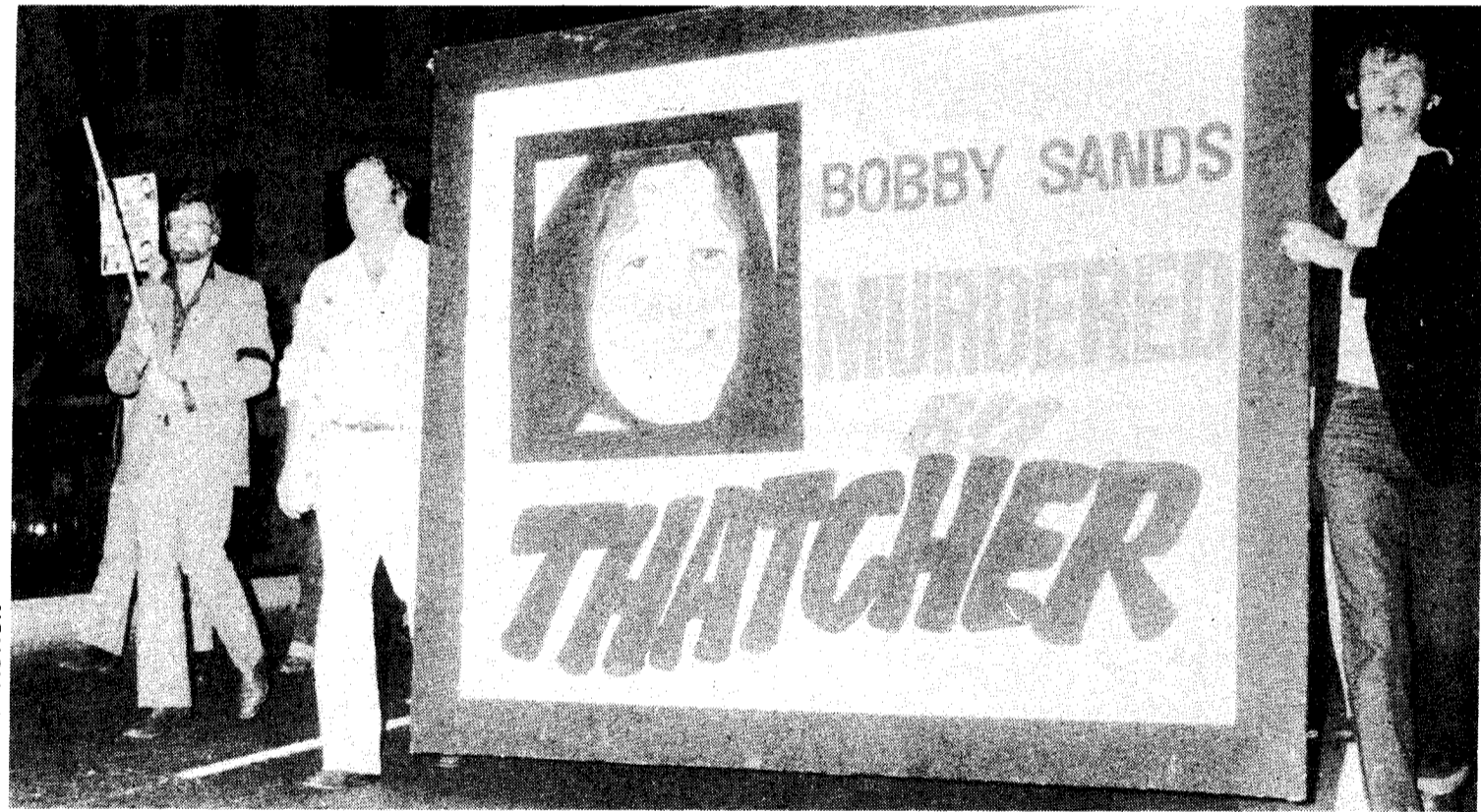


Photo: DIRECT ACTION

H Block campaigners ram home the message in Australia

Demonstrate 4 July

**Sack Concannon!
Break bipartisanship!
Support the hunger strikers!**
2pm Mansfield BR station
Coaches leave York Way, Kings Cross,
8.30am

Organised by Labour Committee on Ireland

right-wing Turkish newspaper which supports the military regime there.

The world knows that the prisoners have been forced to do what they have done by the heartlessness and inhumanity of Thatcher.

Millions are aware that if more prisoners die it will not be because they chose to die, but because the British regime in the north of Ireland allowed them

no other option.

It is now as obvious as it is crucial that the prisoners need all the support they can get.

In London this Saturday, 13 June a demonstration will take place to express that support. Stop Thatcher's mass murder — all out 13 June. Assemble Finsbury Park, 1pm.



SUPPORT IRISH PRISONERS 13 JUNE

Assemble: 1.30 Finsbury Park London

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